

Wabash Plain Dealer

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WEDNESDAY,
FEBRUARY 12, 2020

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Shining light on Wabash County since 1859.

Tomorrow's
weather **29** | **2** 



**Pulse
of Wabash**

Wabash Plain Dealer's new website now available

Check out our new website at www.wabashplaindealer.com and let us know what you think. If you had an account on our previous site, you will need to create a new account. If you registered with the same email address we will be able to locate your previous subscription as well. Once registered, you can also verify your subscription. Please contact web support@wabashplaindealer.com with any questions. Thank you!

Wabash Plain Dealer's new office now open

The Wabash Plain Dealer's new office is now open on the second floor at 99 W. Canal St.

Experience 'President Lincoln' on his birthday

Celebrate President Lincoln's birthday from 10:15 to 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 12, at Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. Featuring Murray Cox as President Abraham Lincoln. Pre-registration is required if staying for lunch with President Lincoln. The lunch reservation deadline is at noon Monday, Feb. 10. The cost for lunch is \$4.50 for those 60 years of age and under; over 60 by donation.

State of Our Communities to celebrate 2019, share plans for 2020

Grow Wabash County will be hosting the third annual State of Our Communities event on Wednesday, Feb. 12 in Legacy Hall at the Honeywell Center. Breakfast will begin at 7:30 a.m. and presentations will begin at 8 a.m. The event should conclude around 10 a.m. Sponsorships and tickets are available by registering here: <https://tinyurl.com/wjs6rbj>.

Celebrate February birthdays

February's Birthday Party will be held at 1 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13, at Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. Featuring Ellen Mock, vocalist, and Peggy Coppler, pianist. Ice

See **PULSE**, page A6

Inside

Classified, B6 Sports, B1
Comics, B4 Education, A5
Crossword, B4 Viewpoint, A4
Obituaries, A3 Weather, A2



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National Weather Service looks for wintry mix, snow

Weather starting
Wednesday
evening into
Thursday morning

By **JARED KEEVER**
jkeever@perutribune.com

After a wintry weekend and then a rainy start to the week, Wabash County residents

could be in for more snow as temperatures are expected to drop with more precipitation on the way midweek.

"More so Wednesday afternoon into evening," National Weather Service meteorologist Brentley Lothamer told the Tribune on Monday.

As of Tuesday, the Weather Service's Northern Indiana office was predicting temperatures to drop to 26 over-

night with a chance for rain and snow on Wednesday.

"At first it would be a rain, snow mix," Lothamer said Monday. "Early evening time, about 6 (o'clock), it will all be snow."

The predictions that Lothamer was looking at Monday afternoon were calling for about 3 to 5 inches of snow in the area.

By Thursday, most of the precipitation is expected to

have left the area.

"The chances Thursday afternoon are real small, 20 percent," Lothamer said. "It will be moving out midday through the evening, Thursday."

Forecasts for the rest of the week, available from the Weather Service website, put temperatures on Thursday with a high of 31. A high of 16, with sunny skies, is expected for Friday.

Manchester hosts Polar Plunge to aid Special Olympics

Freezin' for a Reason
event set for
Saturday, Feb. 22

By **ANNE GREGORY**

Manchester University is hosting its first Polar Plunge, a fundraising event to help support the Special Olympics.

Manchester invites residents of Wabash and Kosciusko counties to Freezin' for a Reason on Saturday, Feb. 22 outside the Physical Education and Recreation Center (PERC).

"This is a great way for individuals and their teams to support our area while having a blast," said Ali Goetcheus, MU director of civic engagement at the Acorns Office of Volunteer Services. "Please join us and commit to raise up to \$75 for Special Olympics."

Team members can sign up as participants, which means they jump in the water, or "virtual plungers," who raise money but do not get wet.

To register, visit <https://www.firstgiving.com/event/soindiana/Polar-Plunge-North-Manchester>.

Events begin at 10 a.m. with sign-ups and welcome, followed by costume judging at noon. The water portion is 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., with the After-Splash Bash lunch at 1:30 p.m.

The goal is to raise \$17,000 for Special Olympics in Wabash and Kosciusko counties, with 50 plungers on campus. The event will highlight local allied



Provided photo

PLUNGE: Manchester invites residents of Wabash and Kosciusko counties to Freezin' for a Reason on Saturday, Feb. 22 outside the Physical Education and Recreation Center (PERC).

sports teams for students with intellectual or physical disabilities.

"If you are taking part in the plunge, we advise

wearing old gym shoes you

don't mind getting wet,"

Goetcheus said. "You'll want to bring a pair of dry shoes and a change of

clothes."

Anne Gregory is the assistant director of media relations in the Office of Strategic Communications at Manchester University.

Purdue Extension to help you Get WalkIN'

Email-based
walking program
now available

STAFF REPORT

Need some motivation to get started but don't have time to attend a class? Get WalkIN' is an email-based walking program being offered through Purdue Extension in Wabash County, according to a press release.

Participants can sign-up, walk on their own and receive emailed support and information. Participants will be asked to complete two short online surveys. Any resident of the county who is aged 18 years and older may enroll.

"Spring will soon be here and that means nicer weather with more time spent outdoors," stated the release. "Why not take this opportunity to start walking and moving more?"

Walking is a popular form of physical activity – and good for your health. Only half of all American adults get the recommended amount of physical activity. Lack of physical activity is directly related to the occurrence of adult obesity and (becoming) overweight. Regular physical activity can lower the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, depression, and falls in older

adults. Walking is an excellent way for most people to increase their physical activity. It is an easy way to start and maintain a physically active lifestyle. Walking is accessible to almost anyone, doesn't require specific skills or fancy workout clothes and equipment."

For more information, contact Mindy Mayes by email at mayes7@purdue.edu or by phone at 260-663-0661 ext. 1408.

4 lawyers quit case after decision on Stone prison time

By **MICHAEL BALSAMO**
and **ERIC TUCKER**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Four lawyers who prosecuted Roger Stone quit the case Tuesday after the Justice Department said it would take the extraordinary step

of lowering the amount of prison time it would seek for President Donald Trump's longtime ally and confidant.

The decision by the Justice Department came just hours after Trump complained that the recommended sentence for Stone was "very horrible and unfair." The Justice Department

said the sentencing recommendation was made Monday night – before Trump's tweet – and prosecutors had not spoken to the White House about it.

The four attorneys, including two who were early members of special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia

team, had made up the Justice Department's trial team and had signed onto a Monday court filing that recommended up to nine years in prison for Stone.

The department's decision to back off the sentencing

See **STONE**, page A2

Democratic congressional candidates to visit

Pat Hackett and
Ellen Marks to appear
together Feb. 25

By **ROB BURGESS**
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

Both of the Democratic candidates running for the Second Congressional District seat in the May Primary Election are scheduled to appear together for a candidate night later this month.

According to a Monday statement to the Plain Dealer by Chad Harris, Wabash County Democratic Party chair, Pat Hackett and Ellen Marks will appear at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25 in the boardroom of the Honeywell Center.

According to the Secretary of State's Office, Marks filed Jan. 13 and Hackett filed Jan. 29 for the seat currently held by Rep. Jackie Walorski, R-Indiana.

Walorski filed to run for re-election Jan. 21. Christopher Glenn Davis, a Republican, filed to run for Walorski's seat Feb. 5.

"We have some great Democrats running for office this year," stated Harris. "Bring questions for both of these outstanding candidates, and become an informed voter. Help decide who the best candidate to run against and defeat Jackie Walorski. This is an amazing opportunity to hear from both candidates up close. Please try to attend, and make the best choice in May."

Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com.

Second Harvest tailgate planned at Senior Center

The distribution
will last from 11 a.m.
to 1 p.m. Friday

STAFF REPORTS

Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana will provide food for families in need at a tailgate distribution from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, Feb. 14, at the Dallas L. Winchester Senior Center, Living Well in Wabash County, 239 Bond St., according to a press release.

Participants must enter the drive-through line from the Hill Street entrance of the city park. The distribution is while supplies last, and there is a limit of three families per vehicle.

No tailgate distributions will take place when wind-chill is reported to be below 0 degrees or the heat index is reported to be 100 degrees.

"The items received at a tailgate event are meant to be supplemental items only. They are not meant to be complete meals," stated the release. "Fresh fruits and vegetables are often provided."

This Second Harvest Tailgate is a collaborative effort between Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana, The Community Foundation of Wabash County and Living Well in Wabash County.

"Tailgates are not possible without the help of dedicated volunteers," stated the release.

To learn how you can help, call Ryan Wagner at 260-563-4475.

Actor Jussie Smollett faces 6 new charges in Chicago

By **DON BABWIN**
and **HERB MCCANN**
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Actor Jussie Smollett was indicted Tuesday for a second time on charges of lying to police about a racist and anti-gay attack he allegedly staged on himself last year in downtown Chicago.

The indictment came from a special prosecutor who was appointed after Cook County prosecutors dropped the same charges last March. Special prosecutor Dan Webb said in a statement that Smollett faces six counts of disorderly conduct, charges that stem from four separate false reports that he gave to police in which he contended he was a victim of a hate crime “knowing that he was not the victim of a crime.”

Smollett, who is black and gay, was originally charged with disorderly conduct last February for allegedly staging the attack and lying about it to investigators. The allegations were dropped the following month with little explanation, angering police officials and then-Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

Tina Glandian, Smollett’s attorney, did not immediately return a call for comment Tuesday.

Smollett told police he was walking home early on Jan. 29, 2019, when two masked men approached him, made racist and homophobic in-

sults, beat him and looped a noose around his neck before fleeing. He said his assailants, at least one of whom he described as white, told him he was in “MAGA country” — a reference to President Donald Trump’s campaign slogan, “Make America Great Again.”

Several weeks later, authorities alleged that Smollett had paid two black friends \$3,500 to help him stage the attack because he was unhappy with his salary as an actor on “Empire” and wanted to drum up publicity for his career.

A judge in August appointed Webb, a former U.S. attorney, as a special prosecutor to look into why the original charges were dropped. Webb also was looking into whether calls that Cook County State’s Attorney Kim Foxx had with a Smollett relative and a former aide of former first lady Michelle Obama unduly influenced the decision to drop charges. Foxx recused herself from the case but continued to weigh in.

At the time, Judge Michael Toomin, who assigned the case to Webb, raised the possibility that Smollett could be charged again.

In his news release, Webb said he concluded that prosecuting Smollett was “in the interest of justice” for a number of reasons, including the extensive details of Smollett’s false account as

well as the resources that the police department threw at the investigation.

Attorneys and the judge noted that in Smollett’s case, double jeopardy does not apply because he was never prosecuted.

The city has sued Smollett, seeking reimbursement of more than \$130,000 for overtime paid to officers who were involved in investigating Smollett’s report. Smollett’s attorneys have said the city should not be allowed to recover costs from Smollett because it accepted \$10,000 from the actor “as payment in full in connection with the dismissal of the charges against him.”

Smollett’s case has become an issue in Foxx’s bid for a second term. Those looking to unseat the first black woman to hold the county’s highest law enforcement position, have blasted her handling of the matter as haphazard and indecisive. They say it indicates she has bad judgment and favors the rich and powerful in deciding who will be prosecuted.

Foxx’s campaign committee issued a biting statement Tuesday referring to former FBI Director James Comey’s decision to briefly reopen an investigation into Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton’s email shortly before the presidential election in 2016 that Donald Trump would win.

STONE

From page A1

recommendation raised questions about political interference and whether Trump’s views hold unusual sway over the Justice Department, which is meant to operate independently of the White House in criminal investigations and prosecutions.

Attorney General William Barr has been a steady ally of Trump’s, clearing the president of obstruction of justice even when special counsel Robert Mueller had pointedly declined to do so and declaring that the FBI’s Russia investigation — which resulted in charges against Stone — had been based on a “bogus narrative.”

On Monday night, prosecutors had recommended Stone serve seven to nine years behind bars after being convicted of charges including lying to Congress, witness tampering and obstructing the House investigation into whether the Trump campaign coordinated with Russia to tip the 2016 election. The recommendation raised the prospect that Stone could receive the harshest sentence of any of the half-dozen Trump aides charged in Mueller’s probe.

In a tweet early Tuesday, Trump said the case against Stone was a “miscarriage of justice.” A Justice Department official said authorities decided to step in and seek a shorter sentence because they had been taken by surprise by the initial recommendation. The person, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said prosecutors had told the department to expect a shorter recommendation.

It is extremely rare for Justice Department leaders to reverse the decision of its own prosecutors on a sentencing recommendation, particularly after that recommendation has been submitted to the court. Normally, United States attorneys have wide latitude to recommend sentences on cases that they prosecuted.

The departures came abruptly after the decision by Justice. Jonathan Kravis resigned his position as an assistant U.S. attorney. He had been a veteran prosecutor in Washington, and though not part of Robert Mueller’s original team, was nonetheless involved in multiple cases brought by the special counsel’s office. Besides the Stone prosecution, Kravis had also signed onto the case against former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort, which resolved with a guilty plea, and against a Russian troll farm accused of spon-

soring a cover social media campaign aimed at dividing public opinion during the 2016 presidential election.

Aaron Zelinsky quit the case and his job in Washington, and would go back to his job as a federal prosecutor in Baltimore. He was working there when he was selected in 2017 for the Mueller team.

He was involved in cases aimed at determining what knowledge the Trump campaign had about Democratic emails that were hacked by Russia and what efforts Trump aides made to get information about them. He was also involved in the prosecution of George Papadopoulos, the former Trump campaign aide who played a critical role in the FBI launching its investigation in the summer of 2016.

A third prosecutor, Adam Jed, who was an early member of Mueller’s team, also withdrew from the case. His status at the Justice Department was not clear. Before joining Mueller’s team, he worked on civil cases there.

By Tuesday evening, a fourth prosecutor, Michael Marando, had left the case.

After the attorneys quit the case, Justice Department officials filed a revised sentencing memorandum with the judge, arguing its initial recommendation could be “considered excessive and unwarranted under the circumstances,” but that it would defer to the court. None of the original prosecutors in Stone’s case signed onto the revised memo.

Sentencing decisions are ultimately up to the judge, who in this case may side with the original recommendation. U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson has repeatedly scolded Stone for his out-of-court behavior, which included a social media post he made of the judge with what appeared to be crosshairs of a gun.

The judge barred Stone from social media last July after concluding that she re-

peatedly flouted his gag order.

Meanwhile, Democrats decried the decision, with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer calling for an investigation by the DOJ’s Inspector General.

“The rule of law and this grand, grand tradition of this wonderful Justice Department is being totally perverted to Donald Trumps’ own personal desires and needs,” the New York Democrat said. “And it’s a disgrace.”

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff said it would be a blatant abuse of power if the Justice Department intervened on behalf of Trump.

“Doing so would send an unmistakable message that President Trump will protect those who lie to Congress to cover up his own misconduct, and that the Attorney General will join him in that effort,” the California Democrat said.

Trump later told reporters that he didn’t speak to Justice officials. “I would be able to do it if I wanted,” he said. “I have the absolute right to do it. I stay out of things to a degree that people wouldn’t believe, but I didn’t speak to them.”

Federal prosecutors also recently softened their sentencing position on former national security adviser Michael Flynn, saying that they would not oppose a probation of punishment after initially saying that he deserved up to six months in prison for lying to the FBI. The Flynn prosecution is also being handled by the U.S. Attorney’s office in Washington.

In the initial memorandum Monday evening, prosecutors asked for Stone to serve between 87 and 108 months in federal prison — the sentence they said was in line with federal guidelines. Such a sentence would send a message to deter others who might consider lying or obstructing a congressional probe or tampering with witnesses, they said.

5-Day Weather Summary

 Wednesday Rain & Snow Likely 34 / 26	 Thursday Snow Likely 29 / 2	 Friday Sunny 9 / 1	 Saturday Mostly Cloudy 33 / 23	 Sunday Rain & Snow Possible 36 / 28
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Sun and Moon

Today's sunset 6:18 p.m.
Tomorrow's sunrise 7:45 a.m.

 Last 2/15	 New 2/23	 First 3/2	 Full 3/9
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Detailed Local Outlook

Today we will see cloudy skies with a 90% chance of rain and snow, high of 34°, humidity of 81%. South southeast wind 3 to 9 mph. Snow accumulation of less than one inch possible. Expect cloudy skies tonight with a 95% chance of snow, overnight low of 26°. East southeast wind 5 to 11 mph.

NPs and PAs make a difference in rural communities

Hello, dear readers, and (yes, it’s mid-February) happy 2020. We hope the new year is treating you well. You’ve filled our mailbox with some very interesting questions and quandaries, including how to follow through on New Year’s resolutions. We look forward to tackling that topic — and many more of your questions — in the coming months.

Meanwhile, onward to your most recent thoughts, tips and suggestions.

■ A reader from central Florida, who just recently caught up with a column about the growing role of nurse practitioners (also referred to as NPs) and physician assistants (also known as PAs) in primary care, wanted to add to that conversation. “Where we live it’s pretty rural, and if we didn’t have nurse practitioners at our local clinic, we wouldn’t have health care,” she wrote. “They make a difference to my family and all the people in our community.”

■ A column about hemorrhoids continues to get a lot of response, both from older adults and new moms. A reader from Ohio says when her hemorrhoids flare up, she knows she’s been slacking off on getting enough salad and fruit into her diet. “I use a drugstore cream, and that helps, but I also start eating a lot more from the produce section,” she wrote. “It takes a couple of weeks, but the episodes always end.”

Another reader, writing from Indiana, had this succinct advice: “Blackstrap molasses, taken orally.” While this approach to hemorrhoid relief isn’t supported by scientific research, there’s no downside to trying it. Blackstrap molasses is rich in minerals such as iron, potassium and magnesium, as well as B vitamins. It’s a byproduct of sugar production, though, so take it in moderation. (And it has a powerful and slightly bitter flavor.) About a tablespoon or so can be mixed into hot water as a drink once or twice a day, and it can be used in cooking as a flavoring or a glaze.

Elizabeth Ko & Eve Glazier
Ask the Doctors



■ A column about a study that linked depression to certain missing microbes in the gut continues to generate a lot of interest. Researchers found that people living with chronic depression lacked two types of microbes, known as Coprococcus and Dialister. Many of you have written to ask how to bolster these populations in the gut. Although increasing the numbers of specific bacteria in the gut is beyond our abilities at this time, you can boost the general health of your gut microbiome with a few simple habits. Eat plenty of fiber from a variety of sources, add fermented foods to your diet, cut back on sugar, cut out processed foods, avoid unnecessary antibiotics and get enough sleep and exercise. These

steps may represent a significant dietary shift for some of you, but it’s worth it. We now know without a doubt that a diverse and robust gut microbiome is tied to overall good health and immune function.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to write. We love hearing from you and look forward to continuing this conversation with you next month.

Eve Glazier, M.D., MBA, is an internist and associate professor of medicine at UCLA Health. Elizabeth Ko, M.D., is an internist and assistant professor of medicine at UCLA Health. Send your questions to askthedoctors@mednet.ucla.edu, or write: Ask the Doctors, c/o UCLA Health Sciences Media Relations, 10880 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1450, Los Angeles, CA, 90024. Owing to the volume of mail, personal replies cannot be provided.

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Roxy 5 Showtimes for Friday, February 7- Thursday, February 13

All showtimes have Closed Captioning available.

Birds of Prey (R) Fri: 6:50, 9:40 Sat: 1:10, 3:55, 6:50, 9:40 Sun: 1:10, 3:55, 6:50 Mon- Thurs: 6:50	Gretel and Hansel (PG13) Fri: 6:40, 9:10 Sat: 1:20, 4:15, 6:40, 9:10 Sun: 1:20, 4:15, 6:40 Mon- Thurs: 6:40	Dolittle (PG) Fri: 7:00, 9:30 Sat: 1:40, 4:25, 7:00, 9:30 Sun: 1:40, 4:25, 7:00 Mon- Thurs: 7:00
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The Gentlemen (R) Fri: 6:30, 9:20 Sat: 1:00, 3:45, 6:30, 9:20 Sun: 1:00, 3:45, 6:30 Mon- Thurs: 6:30	1917 (R) Fri: 7:10, 9:50 Sat: 1:30, 4:05, 7:10, 9:50 Sun: 1:20, 4:15, 7:10 Mon- Thurs: 7:10
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Obituaries

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Memorial Lawns Cemetery, Wabash • 260-563-0421
www.grandstaff-hentgen.com

Lucretia Earhart

April 7, 1951 – Feb. 8, 2020

Lucretia Earhart, 68, of Wabash, Indiana, died at 11:44 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020 at Parkview Randallia in Fort Wayne. She was born April 7, 1951 in Wabash, to Albert DuBois and Evelyn (Lehman) DuBois White.

Lucretia was a 1969 graduate of Southwood High School. She was a certified nursing assistant, and also worked at the ARC of Wabash County. She enjoyed reading, listening to country music, spending time with her two cats Peabody and Yellow, and being with her family.

She is survived by her three daughters, Jennifer (John) Ritenour of McCordsville, Indiana, Lisa Earhart of Fishers, Indiana, and Jessica



Earhart of Wabash, brother, Tom DuBois of Lincolnville, Indiana, and her sister, Traci DuBois of LaFontaine, IN, and several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, and her sister, Cozette Mixon.

Funeral services will be 10:30 a.m. Friday, Feb. 14, 2020 at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, 1241 Manchester Avenue, Wabash, with David Phillips officiating. Burial will be in Falls Cemetery, Wabash. Friends may call 5 – 7 p.m. Thursday, at the funeral home.

Preferred memorial is Animal Shelter of Wabash County.

The memorial guest book for Lucretia may be signed at www.grandstaff-hentgen.com.

Cheryl Lynne Steele

July 11, 1958 – Feb. 4, 2020

Funeral Services for Cheryl Lynne Steele, 61, of Wabash, were 11 a.m., Monday, Feb. 10, 2020 at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, Wabash. Rev. Rick Borgman officiated. Pallbearers were

Rick Steele, Keith Steele, Jim Lewis, Jeff Hampton, Danny Hackworth, Jesse 10, 2020 at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, Wabash. Rev. Rick Borgman officiated. Pallbearers were

Marcella Carol ‘Marcy’ Cooksey

Nov. 4, 1957 – Feb. 5, 2020

Funeral Services for Marcella Carol “Marcy” Cooksey, 62, of rural Wabash, were 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2020 at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, Wabash. Pastor John Cook officiated and Phyllis Price was the musician.

Memories were shared by her brother Rob Dillingham. Pallbearers were John S. Brown – Kevin Cooksey – Rob Dillingham – Cody Teague – Mason Reynolds – Scott Cooksey. Burial was in Falls Cemetery, Wabash.

PENDING SERVICES

Vernon Pratt: 76, of Wabash, died at 12:18 am Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at Lutheran Hospital, Fort Wayne. He is

survived by his wife Ada. Services are pending at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, Wabash.

Global experts study promising drugs, vaccines for new virus

By **JAMEY KEATEN** and **MARIA CHENG**
Associated Press

GENEVA — The World Health Organization convened outside experts Tuesday to try to speed the development of tests, treatments and vaccines against the new coronavirus, as doctors on the front lines experiment on patients with various drugs in hopes of saving lives in the meantime.

The 400 scientists participating in the two-day meeting – many remotely – will try to determine which approaches seem promising enough to advance to the next step: studies in people to prove if they really work.

“We prioritize what is really urgent, what we absolutely need to know to fight the outbreak, to develop drugs, vaccines,” said Marie-Paule Kieny, co-chair of the meeting and a viral-disease specialist at the French research institution INSERM. That will allow science to “focus on what is the most pressing issue and not to disperse too much the efforts.”

Also on the agenda: Is it possible to build a standing supply of drugs similar to the vaccine stockpiles that exist for diseases such as yellow fever and Ebola?

“If any of these drugs does show an effect, there will be massive demand,” Dr. Graham Cooke, a professor of infectious diseases at Imperial College London, said earlier this week.

There are no proven treatments or vaccines for the new and still-mysterious virus, which has infected more than 43,000 people worldwide and killed over 1,000, with the overwhelming majority of cases in China. And while several labs have come up with tests for the virus, there is no quick means of diagnosis, and results take time.

“It’s hard to believe that just two months ago, this virus – which has come to captivate the attention of media, financial markets and political leaders – was completely unknown to us,” WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said at the start of the meeting.

Experts say it could be months or even years before any approved treatments or vaccines are developed, by which time the outbreak might be over. But they say they will at least have more weapons at their disposal if the virus strikes again.

The flu-like disease, officially named COVID-19 on Tuesday, has ranged from mild to serious and can cause pneumonia.

Doctors give patients fluids and pain relievers to try to ease the symptoms, which can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. In the case of those who are severely ill, doctors use ventilators to help them breathe or a machine that pumps and oxygenates their blood outside the body, easing the burden on the heart and lungs.

Epilepsy treatment side effect: New insights about the brain

By **CARLA K. JOHNSON** and **MALCOLM RITTER**
Associated Press

SEATTLE — Though Genette Hofmann is still using her brain, last month she donated a bit of it – to science.

Hofmann needed the surgery – her Seattle surgeon was looking deep into her brain, where he found the trigger for the epileptic seizures that had disrupted her life for 30 years. But to get there, he teased out a bit of healthy tissue the size of a lima bean, and with her blessing quickly sent it to some researchers, who were eager to study brain cells while they were still alive.

That’s how Hofmann joined a long line of epilepsy patients who’ve helped scientists reveal basic secrets of the brain – knowledge that could pay off in better ways to measure consciousness in brain-injury patients and new treatments for a variety of diseases.

Research volunteers such as Ruth Nall, who made a different kind of contribution in a California hospital room, reading sentences aloud as a network of surgically implanted sensors kept close track of how her brain worked.

Since she was going to have electrodes implanted anyway, she reasoned, why not help out?

“Plus,” she added, “I’d have visitors.”

Epilepsy disrupts the brain’s electrical activity, producing recurrent seizures that involve strange sensations, behaviors, emotions and, sometimes, loss of consciousness. Most people with epilepsy don’t need surgery and can control seizures with medications. But when surgery is necessary, research scientists can ask to piggyback on the procedures for a rare chance to study the brain directly.

For decades, studies of epilepsy patients have revealed secrets of the brain, like how the two halves operate differently. And research with “H.M.,” a now-deceased Connecticut man who’s been

called the most famous patient in the history of neuroscience, revealed key insights into how memory works.

The disease has a long history of revealing the importance of the brain to memory, emotion and everything we call the self, says Christof Koch, chief scientist at the Allen Institute in Seattle, where Hofmann’s cells were analyzed. “Seizures have taught us more about brain and the mind, and the relationship between the two, than any other disease,” he said.

Hofmann’s brain cells were rushed to the institute on “life support” in a cooler rigged up with artificial cerebral spinal fluid and oxygen. At the lab, researcher Herman Tung sliced the pearl of brain into thin sheets for viewing with a powerful microscope, readying it for a three-part series of experiments.

After resting for an hour after slicing, Hofmann’s brain cells were ready for their star turn under the microscope.

Researcher Katherine Baker found a single brain cell and recorded its electrical activity. She injected dye that spread into the threadlike dendrites of the neuron to reveal its shape.

Baker removed the cell’s nucleus for the third step: a readout of which genes are turned off and which are turned on.

About three-quarters of such donations at the Allen Institute come from epilepsy patients; the rest come from cancer surgeries. The Allen Institute is building an online atlas that makes information on hundreds of human brain cells freely available for study. The institute hopes that will provide a new avenue, beyond brain scans and animal studies, for tackling conditions like Alzheimer’s disease and autism.

For Hofmann, 57, the decision to contribute to the study was simple, even beyond her own epilepsy. She spent years caring for a grandmother with dementia.

“It was the easiest decision I’ve ever made,” she said.

“This will be my chance to make a difference.”

Dr. Andrew Ko, who performed Hofmann’s surgery at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, stressed that it’s important to make sure patients understand the difference between what’s needed for therapy and what’s optional for research. At Harborview, Ko talks to patients about treatment while a research coordinator discusses the opportunity to participate in studies, he said.

Nall, the California woman, underwent surgery too. But before that, doctors had to discover the spot that was triggering her seizures.

To do that, surgeons often implant arrays of 100 or more sensors on and within a patient’s brain, to eavesdrop on its activity and catch the trigger in the act of causing a seizure. Patients being monitored in this way may spend a week or more in a hospital room as doctors wait for seizures to happen.

During that time, patients don’t have a lot to do. For neuroscience researchers, a group of people with implanted brain electrodes and plenty of time is a golden opportunity.

“It is rare that you have the opportunity to study the brain in such a detailed way in awake people,” says Dr. Joshua Rosenow of Northwestern University.

In some cases, researchers use the implanted electrodes for stimulation. A few years ago, to explore the role of a certain part of the brain in perceiving faces, Dr. Josef Parvizi of Stanford University activated that area in a 41-year-old patient. The man was looking at Parvizi, who was next to his hospital bed, when the stimulation began.

“You just turned into somebody else,” the patient told Parvizi. “Your nose got saggy and went to the left. You almost look like somebody I’ve seen before but somebody different. That was a trip.”

Other times, the brain electrodes are used to monitor what happens as patients do specific mental tasks. Patients

may sniff odors, do math, sing, read specific words or sentences aloud, listen to music or speech, look at faces on a screen, name objects in line drawings, stick out their tongues, or do other things meant to create specific brain activity. All the while, scientists track what’s going on in their brains.

“There is an explosion of studies in this field, because it is immensely important to know the timing of events in the brain, which areas light up first” and which follow, said Parvizi. “And when area A lights up, what does area B do?”

The monitoring of Nall’s brain provided data for several papers published in the past couple years. One of her experimental tasks sounds a little strange: During her 2013 hospital stay she was asked to repeat the sentence, “I never said she stole my money” over and over, putting an emphasis on a different word each time. Those changes altered the meaning of the sentence.

Researchers had sought her help in learning how the brain produces and controls speech, perhaps a step toward helping people unable to talk. That goal struck a chord with Nall, of Waterford, who recalled that an uncle’s voice was stilled by Lou Gehrig’s disease.

Looking back, she said she’d encourage others to take the same step. “It is something you feel good about later,” she said. “Let your life be defined by the lives that you change.”

Two weeks after Hofmann’s surgery, a scar curves from the top of her right ear to her forehead hairline. “So far, so good,” she said. “No seizures.” Part of her brain is gone, but she doesn’t feel anything’s missing. In fact, happy memories have surfaced, “things I haven’t thought of since I was a girl.”

Contributing brain cells to science “makes me so proud and so satisfied,” she said. “It makes me feel more connected to the human race.”

Mandela’s release birthed a new South Africa

By **ANDREW MELDRUM** and **NOOBILE NTSHANGASE**
Associated Press

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — Thirty years ago, Nelson Mandela was released from 27 years of imprisonment by South Africa’s apartheid regime and instantly galvanized the country, and the world, to dismantle the brutal system of racial oppression.

Raising a clenched-fist salute and striding purposefully from the gates of Victor Verster prison, Mandela, then 71, made it clear he was committed to ending apartheid and establishing majority rule and rights for all in South Africa.

His release gave many South Africans their first view of Mandela because during his imprisonment the regime banned the publication of images of him and his speeches. And then, suddenly, he was on national television, urging massive changes.

“Comrades and fellow South Africans, I greet you all in the name of peace, democracy and freedom for all,” Mandela said hours after his release, speaking to throngs of supporters at Cape Town’s City Hall.

On Tuesday, current President Cyril Ramaphosa, who

held the microphone during Mandela’s address, dramatically returned to the City Hall to address the nation, saying Mandela’s stirring address was a “speech that birthed a nation.”

Just over four years after his release, Mandela was elected president in the country’s first all-race elections, leading South Africa out of decades of violently imposed discrimination. Under his leadership, South Africa drafted and passed a constitution widely praised for upholding the rights of all, becoming one of the first to explicitly endorse gay rights.

A Truth and Reconciliation Commission took South Africa on a compelling, painful path to air the injustices perpetrated during the more than 40 years of apartheid rule.

Mandela, and then South African President F.W. de Klerk, who freed him, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993 “for their work to peacefully end apartheid and for laying the foundation for a new democratic South Africa.”

Anglican archbishop Desmond Tutu, himself a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, marked the 30th anniversary of Mandela’s release.

“Nelson Mandela emerged

from prison to dazzle South Africa and the world with his warmth and human values,” wrote Tutu and his wife, Leah, in a short statement. “Circumstances and priorities change over time, but good values don’t go out of fashion. We miss him. Love and blessings.”

Magnanimous, charismatic and inclusive during his one term as president which ended in 1999, Mandela led South Africa to a new era of democracy. In retirement he remained active in encouraging rights for all.

Today’s South Africa is dogged by serious problems of inequality, poverty and violence, largely a result of the stubborn legacy of apartheid. Some South Africans have criticized Mandela for making too many compromises, especially to the white minority, which continues to enjoy prosperity.

Standing beside a statue of Mandela at Cape Town City Hall Tuesday, Ramaphosa said the country still struggles with racial divisions and inequality and strives to live up to Mandela’s legacy.

“Millions of our people continue to live in poverty ... the divide between haves and have-nots continues to wid-

en,” said Ramaphosa.

Ramaphosa said Mandela’s release “was a defining moment in our onward march toward democracy” in a statement to mark the anniversary.

But “inequality, especially as defined by race and gender, remains among the highest in the world. Unemployment is deepening and poverty is widespread. Violence, including the violence that men perpetrate against women, continues to ravage our communities,” Ramaphosa said.

He urged all South Africans to take inspiration from Mandela’s legacy to work together to help solve these problems.

Former president de Klerk also emphasized the challenges that South Africa faces, including “inadequate education, health and municipal services,” and “unacceptable levels of inequality, poverty and unemployment.”

The last president of apartheid said that “South Africa in 2020 is emphatically on the wrong road: it is headed not toward a ‘New Dawn’ but toward very dark and threatening storm clouds.” He urged South Africa to follow Mandela’s example and “return to the road of freedom, toleration and non-racialism.”

Opinion

SPEAK UP

How to contact your legislators:

U.S. Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind.
B33 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
1-202-224-5623
<http://young.senate.gov/contact>

U.S. Sen. Mike Braun, R-Ind.
B85 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-4814
<http://braun.senate.gov/>

U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski, R-District 2
419 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-3915

State Sen. Andy Zay, R-District 17
Indiana Senate
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
1-800-382-9467
Senator.Zay@iga.in.gov

State Rep. David Wolkins, R-District 18
Indiana House
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
1-800-382-9841
h18@in.gov

To email any Indiana lawmaker, go to this website: www.in.gov/cgi-bin/legislative/contact/contact.pl

LETTERS GUIDELINES

The Wabash Plain Dealer encourages your letters to the editor forum, which is designed to be a forum for exchange of ideas between readers about issues of community importance.

Please sign your letter. Your name will be used with the letter that is published in the Plain Dealer. Your letter will be returned if it is your desire to remain anonymous.

Since we may want to write or call you to verify the letter, we ask that you include your address and telephone number. All our letters to the editor are published in the interest of fair play, so we trust our letter writers will refrain from personal attacks on other persons or groups.

A letter should be less than two pages long, preferably of double-spaced typing.

In order to give everyone an opportunity to participate in this exchange of ideas, please try to limit your letters to one per month per household.

To submit a letter, please write the Wabash Plain Dealer at 123 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992.

Letters also may be hand-delivered to the newspaper office, 123 W. Canal St. The office is open 9-11:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you should deliver a letter during non-business hours, a drop slot is located to the left of the front door. Letters may be faxed to 260-563-0816, or email them to wabashplainedeal.com with "Letters to the Editor" in the subject line.



DAILY SCRIPTURE

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:16

The Supreme Court can stop the Electoral College from getting worse

The Supreme Court has agreed to hear two cases involving the electoral college, the antiquated system that twice in recent history has installed the loser of the popular vote for president in the White House and could have that perverse result again in 2020. Alas, it's beyond the power of the court to do away with the electoral vote system, but the justices can prevent it from becoming even less democratic.

Although U.S. citizens cast ballots for president on election day in November, they are actually choosing people to serve as electors — usually party loyalists — who convene in state capitals in December to formally choose a chief executive. Laws in 29 states and the District of Columbia bind those electors to reflect their citizens' votes. (In 48 states, all of the electoral votes go to the winner of the statewide popular vote, and D.C. also allocates its electoral vote on a winner-take-all basis. Maine and Nebraska allocate some electoral votes to candidates who finish first in congressional districts.)

But in 2016, as in previous elections, some electors decided to support people other than the candidate who carried the popular vote in their states. The two cases the court will review — one from Washington state, the other from Colorado — raise the question of whether states can penalize or remove such "faithless electors." The court should answer yes.

In the Washington state case, three electors — Peter Chiaflo, Levi Guerra and Esther John — voted not for Hillary Clinton, who carried the state, but former Secretary of State Colin Powell, who wasn't even on the ballot. They were fined \$1,000 each for violating a state law binding electors to vote for the popular-vote winner. The Supreme Court of Washington

upheld both the law and the fines.

In Colorado, where Clinton also won the popular vote, Micheal Baca was removed as an elector after he tried to vote for former Ohio Gov. John Kasich. He appealed to the U.S. 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, which ruled in his favor, holding that "the Constitution provides no express role for the states after appointment of its presidential electors." The court also said that the definitions of the words "elector," "vote" and "ballot" — all occurring in the Constitution — imply "the right to make a choice or voice an individual opinion."

This is a close question, but the court should uphold the laws against faithless electors, for two reasons.

First, the overriding goal of the framers of the Constitution was to give states authority over the selection of electors. While it's true that early in American history, electors were chosen by state legislatures, states long ago decided that the better approach was to award electoral votes on the basis of the popular vote. The court should respect that decision by allowing states to penalize or replace electors who disregard their instructions.

Second, ensuring that voters have the final say in the selection of electors is consistent with a trend toward participatory democracy that is also reflected in changes in the Constitution, especially the 17th Amendment ratified in 1913. That amendment took the choice of U.S. senators away from state legislatures and provided for popular election for the Senate.

Of course, the ultimate culmination of that democratizing trend would be a constitutional amendment to abolish the electoral college altogether and provide for popular election of the president. But even if approved by a two-thirds vote in both houses of

Congress, such an amendment would require ratification by three-fourths of the states. (Amendments can also be proposed by a constitutional convention, but ratification would still require approval by three-fourths of the states.)

Because amending the Constitution is such a daunting proposition, reformers have proposed an alternative called the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. Under that arrangement, participating states pledge to award all their electoral votes to the candidate who wins the national popular vote. The compact, however, doesn't go into effect until it includes enough states to constitute a majority of 270 electoral votes. So far it has been endorsed by 15 states (including California) and the District of Columbia, representing 196 electoral votes.

Enforcement of the compact would mean, effectively, that the winner of the popular vote would become president. That would of course be preferable to the current system, but its prospects are also uncertain. In any case, the surest way to make the presidential election a true vote of the people would be to amend the Constitution.

By all means the Supreme Court should rule that states can require electors to honor the popular vote in those states. But even after such a ruling, it will be possible for a candidate who finishes second in the national popular vote to win the presidency, as George W. Bush did in 2000 and President Trump did in 2016.

The court can't prevent such a disservice to democracy. It's up to the American people to make it clear to their elected representatives that the electoral college is an undemocratic anachronism.

This editorial was first published in the Los Angeles Times.

Back to basics in education, and away from vocational indoctrination

Indiana's economic future will be primarily determined by the share of Hoosier adults who graduated from college. If that share remains low, our economy will languish, our incomes will continue to fall

Michael Hicks



further behind the national average and our best-educated citizens will relocate elsewhere. This truth cannot be too often repeated, but it begs other questions, mostly about schooling, and the needs of citizens who do not

go to college.

For most of us, the bulk of our formal education comes in K-12 schools, rather than college or graduate school. Public schools remain the most common preparation for college and life afterwards. A good K-12 experience can prepare us to learn throughout our life, while giving us the basics of science, mathematics, literature and the arts.

For kids heading to college, rigorous high school programs are important. But, for kids not heading to college, the rigor and substance of K-12 is even more critical. This is the last time those students will receive formal education designed to make them a learned person. That fact is reason enough to question the way Indiana now focuses vocational education. Yet, the General Assembly has legislation before it to align curriculum from primary to college to meet workforce needs.

Now, to be clear, I don't know what specific skills today's middle school kids will need in two decades, but neither does anyone else. I am merely being honest about my inability to know the unknowable. For the record, acknowledging such limits to knowledge used to be a feature of conservatism.

Continuing labor market changes, including automation, artificial intelligence and much more widespread adoption of today's technologies make it nearly impossible to predict job specific skills of the future. Asking business leaders these questions is folly. A full half of today's businesses will be gone by 2030, and they are as ignorant as the rest of us about these changes.

To accentuate the point, imagine today's labor markets and technologies from the vantage point of 2000. The first Blackberry Phone was two years away, China was a modest importer, and Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg was a high school sophomore. Now imagine how a committee in Indianapolis is going to design an effective, integrated curriculum to meet workforce needs two decades into the future. They are not. The state's recent track record on such matters should generate significantly more humility.

The only skill that we are certain will be needed by today's kids in 20 years is the ability to learn and master new skills. Our certain ignorance about the specific skills needed in 2040 is a compelling argument for more focus on basics in K-12 education; stronger basic math, science and literacy. The focus on vocational schooling is stunning hubris.

We will always need workers with skills that differ from those taught in a college classroom. Workers with different types of education bring to bear different skills into labor markets. But, it is a remarkable fact that both wages and productivity for high school graduates are highest in places with large shares of college graduates. Today, the worst employment options for non-college graduates are in cities with few college graduates. This suggests that labor markets reward non-college skills that complement those of college graduates. These skills are almost certainly not those we are presenting to unwitting middle and high school students as a gateway to non-college careers.

Michael J. Hicks, PhD, is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University. Hicks earned doctoral and master's degrees in economics from the University of Tennessee and a bachelor's degree in economics from Virginia Military Institute. He has authored two books and more than 60 scholarly works focusing on state and local public policy, including tax and expenditure policy and the impact of Wal-Mart on local economies.



Write for your life

If you're thinking of writing a novel, be sure to write only about your own race and culture. Or else.

The recent controversy over "American Dirt," a book that was first widely acclaimed — before its author

Kathleen Parker



became the target of violent threats — reminds us yet again that freedom is fragile and that democratic ideals of tolerance and fairness dangle by a thread.

Author Jeanine Cummins doubtless thought she was acting nobly when she spent five years researching the immigrant border crisis — traveling to Mexico, interviewing immigrants, volunteering at a soup kitchen that serves migrants, and visiting orphanages.

But thanks perhaps to the overindulgence of her publisher (Flatiron) — Cummins reportedly received a seven-figure advance — and a high-profile rollout, Cummins earned the contempt of critics who considered her unworthy of her topic, not because the book wasn't quite good enough (as some critics have noted) but because she wasn't sufficiently Latina. Poor Cummins had only one Latina grandmother. And, get this: Her Irish husband, once an illegal immigrant, wasn't quite underdoggyish enough. (Never mind that many Irish immigrants came to America as indentured servants, or that it was common for signs on stores and restaurants and for job listings to say: "No Irish." Or "No Irish Need Apply.")

Once Cummins' genetic shortcomings caught the attention of social media's literati, it was off to the bonfires. Not only was she condemned, prompting her to cancel her book tour in fear for her safety, but a petition was circulated asking Oprah to remove Cummins' novel from her book-club list.

Regardless of the author's relative value to the genre of fiction, it should be obvious that one's DNA does not predict literary talent, insight or even wisdom born of experience.

How dare William Styron write "Sophie's Choice" when he was neither Jewish, a woman nor a Holocaust survivor. A list of authors who have written great books without meeting today's ancestry requirements would fill, well, a library.

Critics have to say something, of course — and, apparently, there's plenty enough to say about "American Dirt" without requiring the author to expectorate into a test-tube. Even Cummins seemed to foreshadow what would come her way when she wrote in her own afterword, "I wished someone slightly browner than me would write it." Had I been her editor, I'd have questioned her grammar — "browner than I" — but not her right to pursue a topic of her choosing.

This is what the threats essentially aimed to do — censor Cummins based on her genetic background. Merely reading the preceding sentence should send chills up one's spine. And seeking to silence or shame her with threats of violence is a scene from some other dystopian novel about a country or time not our own.

Any columnist worth her salt has been the target of hatred countless times, though it's become more frequent in recent years. It's much harder to sustain vitriol through the laborious process of a handwritten letter than it is to vent one's spleen with a few characters that can be read by millions in a nanosecond.

A high-tech mob can be marshalled in moments and next thing you know: A book tour is cancelled; a cartoonist goes into hiding; an artist decides no painting is worth his life. Such conditions put not only freedom at risk but also the creative imperative. Provocative art and literature are doomed in a censorious society, which is why, until now, we've tolerated the worst examples of human creativity in order to protect the best.

The trend of punishing certain folks for expressing unpopular thoughts — or for not meeting standards set by a given special-interest group — has been gaining traction for decades. And I should know. I've abandoned certain issues to avoid the wrath of sensitivity monitors, who are doing their best to eliminate humor.

This isn't to say all things should be said or printed — and I am thankful to my editors (most of the time). But wariness isn't enough against threats of violence. All thinking people should rail against the bullying of self-anointed censors whose methods have no place in a free, democratic society. I may not read it, but I plan to buy Cummins' book in solidarity. It's a small, revolutionary act, but it seems the least one should do.

Kathleen Parker's email address is kathleenparker@washpost.com.

Education

Erin Whetstone performs with Trine Wind Ensemble

Wabash native to play at Feb. 23 concert

STAFF REPORT

Music of mystery and adventure will fill the T. Furth

Center for Performing Arts as the Trine University Wind Ensemble performs music from television shows and movies related to secret agents and spying at its Feb. 23 concert, according to a press release.

“I Spy: A Concert of Espionage” begins at 3 p.m. and is free and open to the public. The wind ensemble is under the direction of Prof. Mark Kays, chair of Trine’s Music Department. Erin Whetstone of Wabash,

majoring in Forensic Science at Trine, will perform with the Wind Ensemble. Whetstone plays alto saxophone. The concert opens with “Get Smart” by Irving Sza-thmary, followed by “The

Man From U.N.C.L.E.” by Daniel Pemberton. Assistant director Alyssa Newbill will conduct “Mission: Impossible” by Lalo Schifrin and Danny Elfman, then Kays will return to the podium for “The Pink Pan-

ther” by Henry Mancini and “Bond James Bond,” arranged by Stephen Bulla, which includes music from “Goldfinger,” “The Spy Who Loved Me,” “The World Is Not Enough,” “Skyfall” and “Live and Let Die.”



By ROB BURGESS / Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

This example photo of a painted plow shows one of the possibilities.

Paint the Plow with INDOT in 2020

Applications available now to Indiana middle and high schools

STAFF REPORT

The Indiana Department of Transportation has launched the 2020 Paint the Plow campaign and invites Indiana schools to apply to participate, according to a press release.

Paint the Plow is open to all middle schools, high

schools and career-technical schools across the state. Schools/programs will be paired with a local INDOT unit to paint an INDOT snow plow blade with original artwork representing their school. Applications and additional program details can be found at paint-theplow.indot.in.gov

In addition to being seen in full service during the winter weather months, the blades may be used at events within the school’s community to enhance public awareness, promote safety and foster a greater appreciation of both INDOT and the school. Only students who are cur-

rently enrolled in the applicant school may participate in the creation, execution and completion of the art project. For more information or questions about the Paint the Plow campaign, visit painttheplow.indot.in.gov to find the contact information for your District.

Trine Drama Club announces cast for ‘25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee’

North Manchester native part of the lineup for the production

STAFF REPORT

The Trine University Drama Club has announced the cast for its upcoming production of “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee,” according to a press release. Performances of the musical comedy, scheduled for 7 p.m. April 3 and 4, and 2 p.m. April 5 in the T. Furth Center for the Performing Arts, are free and open to the public. Cast members include:

- Darius Surgenavic, a freshman from Columbiana, Ohio, majoring in software engineering, as Chip Tolentino.
- Beatrice Snavelly, a sophomore from North Manchester, majoring in psychology, as Logainne Schwartz and Grubbeniere.
- Matthew Ketner, a junior from Ottawa, Ohio, majoring in civil engineering, as Leaf Coneybear.
- Blake Williams, a freshman from Elkhart, majoring in communication, as William Barfee.
- Alexis Koshenina, a sophomore from Remington, majoring in forensic science and biology, as Olive Ostrovsky.

- Kaitlyn Lee, a sophomore from San Diego, California, majoring in English and communication, as Rona Lisa Perretti.
 - Felix Goetschius-Adams from Angola, as Mitch Mahoney.
 - Jaden Hyre, a sophomore from Fremont, majoring in social studies education, as Vice Principal Douglas Panch.
- The play is directed by Byron Bond, Ph.D., Drama Club advisor and professor in Trine’s Department of Humanities and Communication. With music and lyrics by William Finn and a book by Rachel Sheinkin, “The 25th Annual Putnam Coun-

ty Spelling Bee” centers on a fictional spelling bee set in Putnam Valley Middle School. Quirky adolescents compete in the Bee, which is directed by equally quirky grown-ups. The 2005 Broadway production won two Tony Awards, including Best Book. “The young spelling bee contestants are going through the challenges of growing up as well as the pressure of competition,” said Bond. “It makes for a fun-filled musical with an undertone of seriousness.” The production is for mature audiences. For more information, contact Bond at bondb@trine.edu.

Feds: Ex-convict extorted college students

By JIM MUSTIAN
Associated Press

NEW YORK — An ex-convict accused of bilking several college students out of nearly \$1 million and forcing some into prostitution or unpaid labor was arrested Tuesday on extortion and sex trafficking charges. Lawrence “Larry” Ray was previously known for his role in helping to send former New York City police commissioner Bernard Kerik, who was a close confidant of Rudy Giuliani, to prison. Federal prosecutors said Ray, 60, used “physical, sexual and psychological abuse” to extort money from five different students at Sarah Lawrence College, a private liberal arts college outside New York City. He convinced them they were indebted to him, authorities said, subjecting them to “grueling interrogations” that spanned hours and deprived them of food and sleep. Ray was taken into custody Tuesday and expected to appear hours later in Manhattan federal court. He had previously denied the allegations, saying they were the result of a conspiracy against him. It was not clear whether he had a defense attorney who could comment on the charges.

U.S. Attorney Geoffrey Berman told reporters the investigation was prompted by an article that appeared last year in New York magazine. Ray allegedly ensnared many of his victims while they were college sophomores at Sarah Lawrence. His first victims were his daughters’ roommates, Berman said. Ray moved into the students’ on-campus housing in late 2010, presented himself as a father figure to the roommates and began conducting “therapy” sessions with them, according to an indictment filed in U.S. District Court. Prosecutors said he alienated them from their parents, persuading some of them to move into a Manhattan apartment and convincing them they were “broken.” “After gaining his victims’ trust, Ray turned on them, falsely accusing them of harming him by attempting to poison him or to deliberately damage his property,” Berman said. Ray solicited false confessions from more than a half-dozen victims, Berman said, and coerced them to make payments “they did not actually owe and could not possibly afford.” Prosecutors said Ray recorded some of

the confessions. In interviews with New York magazine, Ray said he believed he was being poisoned as part of a conspiracy hatched by some of the students and Kerik, who denied any involvement. Sarah Lawrence said Tuesday that it has not been contacted by federal prosecutors but would cooperate “if invited to do so.” The college said it investigated the allegations raised in the New York magazine article but “did not substantiate those specific claims.” “The charges contained in the indictment are serious, wide-ranging, disturbing and upsetting,” the college said in a statement. “As always the safety and well-being of our students and alumni is a priority for the college.” Prosecutors allege that Ray directed the students to drain money from their parents’ savings accounts and forced some of them into unpaid labor at a family member’s property in North Carolina. Others opened lines of credit or solicited contributions from others to help pay the false debts. “Ray subjected his victims to almost unspeakable abuse,” Berman said, alleging Ray once tied a woman to a chair and placed a plastic

bag over her head that nearly suffocated her. Ray collected more than \$500,000 from that woman after forcing her into prostitution, prosecutors said. Ray previously played a role in a scandal involving Kerik, a former police driver for Giuliani while he was mayor. Kerik became New York City’s corrections commissioner in 1998 and then its police commissioner from 2000 to 2001, serving during the 9/11 attacks. Kerik nearly became President George Bush’s homeland security secretary in 2004, but his name was abruptly withdrawn as the nominee. Two days later, The Daily News reported that Ray, who had been the best man at Kerik’s wedding, had come forward with evidence that Kerik failed to report thousands of dollars in gifts he’d received while working for the city. A the time, Ray was under indictment in a \$40 million stock scam. Kerik ultimately served nearly four years in prison for tax fraud, making false statements and other charges related to gifts he accepted from companies looking for favors, including a construction firm that wanted his help getting a city license.

Indiana Farm Bureau now accepting 2020 student scholarship applications

The deadline to apply is March 1

STAFF REPORT

Indiana Farm Bureau is now accepting applications for its student scholarship program for the 2020-2021 school year. Each year, INFB awards 13 scholarships to incoming or current college students who are pursuing a career in agriculture, according to a press release.

The scholarships offered are the Marion Stackhouse Memorial Scholarship, two Collegiate Farm Bureau Scholarships and 10 Carolyn Hegel Memorial Scholarships. The scholarship money can be applied to tuition, housing, books and other educational expenses. The Marion Stackhouse Memorial Scholarship is a \$1,000 scholarship named after the former INFB president, who served from 1976 to 1987. The scholarship is awarded to one student annually, based on their educational successes and career aspirations. Additionally, INFB awards 10 district scholarships. The Carolyn Hegel Memorial Scholarship is a \$500

scholarship named after the long-time INFB 2nd vice president, who served the organization for 26 years. Applicants for the Marion Stackhouse Memorial Scholarship and the Carolyn Hegel Memorial Scholarship must be incoming or current college students pursuing a degree in agriculture and members of INFB. For existing Collegiate Farm Bureau members, INFB awards two \$1,000 scholarships annually. Winners of these scholarships must be members of an INFB collegiate chapter at Purdue University, Vincennes University, Huntington University or Ancilla College. To apply for a scholarship, visit INFB’s scholarships and grants page. The deadline to apply is March 1. The application asks students to detail their educational successes and answer several questions about their future educational and career goals. Many county Farm Bureaus also offer annual scholarships for students in their area. To learn more, visit www.infb.org and visit the Grants and Scholarships page under the Resources tab.

Unions ask: Is it time to rethink school shooting drills?

By PAT EATON-ROBB
Associated Press

The nation’s two largest teachers unions want schools to revise or eliminate active shooter drills, asserting Tuesday that they can harm students’ mental health and that there are better ways to prepare for the possibility of a school shooting.

The American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association joined with the advocacy group Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund in calling for an end to unannounced drills or drills that simulate gun violence. “Everywhere I travel, I hear from parents and educators about active shooter drills terrifying students, leaving them unable to concentrate in the classroom and unable to sleep at night,” said Lily Eskelsen Garcia, president of the National Education Association. “So traumatizing students as we work to keep students safe from gun violence is not the answer. That is why if schools are going to do drills, they need to take steps to ensure the drills do more good than harm.”

The report released Tuesday recommends schools concentrate on training teachers to respond to an active shooter incident rather than drilling students. It also issued guidelines for schools that decide to use drills. Those include never simulating an actual shooting; giving parents, educators and students advance notice of any drill; working with mental health officials to create age-appropriate and trauma-in-

formed drills; and tracking the effects of drills. About 95 percent of schools drilled students on lockdown procedures in the 2015-16 school year, according to a survey by the National Center for Education Statistics. “In Indiana they were shooting teachers with rubber pellets so they would feel the adrenaline of what a school shooting would feel like,” said Shannon Watts, founder of Moms Demand Action, which is part of Everytown. “In California recently, a superintendent hired a stranger to wear a mask to rattle the doors of classrooms without letting faculty and students know. We’ve seen students asked to pretend to be victims and lie down using fake blood in the hallway.” Jean-Paul Guilbault, the chief executive of the Alice Training Institute, which runs active shooter drills, said they are effective when done appropriately. He said his company never runs surprise drills but believes that simulating an event is the best way to prepare for one “and allow students to practice their options, whether that be lockdown or evacuation.” “According to a recent study conducted by The U.S. Secret Service, most school shootings last for two minutes or less, and nearly half of the events studied ended within one minute,” he said in a written statement. “That means it is up to us to keep ourselves safe for those seconds that will feel as slow as a lifetime. We drill so everyone has a plan when faced with danger, to give people a chance at survival.”

PULSE

From page A1

cream and homemade cake will be served. Sign up today for a fun-filled celebration.

Skywarn weather spotter training set

A Skywarn weather spotter training session has been scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13 at the skating rink at the Honeywell Center, 275 W. Market St. Check-in begins at 6:30 p.m. On-line registration is available at <https://wabashspotter.eventzilla.net>. Registration may also be completed by calling 260-563-3181 or 574-834-1104.

Valentine potluck lunch scheduled

Join the Annual Valentine Exchange and Luncheon at 11 a.m. Friday, Feb. 14, at Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. Pre-registration is required. The lunch reservation deadline is at noon Wednesday, Feb. 12.

Laketon American Legion Auxiliary plans Valentine's Day dinner

The Laketon American Legion Auxiliary has planned a special Valentine's Day dinner for 4:30 to 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 14 at 15 N. Main St., Laketon. There will be a choice of prime rib or shrimp, potato, salad, dessert, drink and flower for the ladies for \$12.50. Advance tickets and carry-outs are available. For more information, call 260-306-0162.

Wabash Kiwanis Club's 100th Anniversary Gala planned

The gala will begin with a social hour from 6 to 7 p.m., with the dinner and programs set for 7 to 10 p.m. Friday, Feb. 14, at the Honeywell Center's Legacy Hall. For those who can't attend the gala, financial donations of any size for Riley Hospital

by individuals, businesses and organizations are also welcomed and appreciated. Checks can be mailed to the Wabash Kiwanis Club at P.O. Box 699, Wabash, IN 46992 with "Riley" in the memo line.

MSD to host community presentation Feb. 17

MSD of Wabash County will be hosting a Community Presentation to share updates on their Strategic Plan at 7 to 8:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 17 at Northfield Jr./Sr. High School, 154 W. 200 North.

'Ask a Teenager Tech Basics class scheduled

"Ask a Teenager" Tech Basics: 1 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 18 at Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. Sign up requested by calling 260-563-4475. Bring your electronic devices and your questions, assistance provided by Heartland Career Center Tech students.

Honeywell Foundation's annual art competition open

The Honeywell Foundation's Clark Gallery will be hosting its annual 92 County Art Show through Wednesday, Feb. 19. A public reception for this event will take place at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 19. For more information, contact Michele Hughes at mhughes@HoneywellFoundation.org or call the Honeywell Center Box Office at 260-563-1102.

Experience Mardi Gras, Wabash-style

From 12:30 to 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 20, at Living Well Winchester Center, 239 Bond St. Featuring Mentalist Chad Collyer, king cake, masks, beads, games and prizes. The 2020 Mardi Gras King and Queen will be announced.

Career Closet donations sought

Donations for the Career

Closet will be collected through Friday, Feb. 21. Manchester University will accept gently used professional or business casual clothing and accessories. This event helps students who are not financially able to purchase professional clothing be able to dress appropriately when talking with employers and programs. Donations may be brought to Room 103 of the Chinworth Center on the North Manchester campus or Sarah Lauck at the Fort Wayne campus.

MSD to host community presentation Feb. 27

MSD of Wabash County will be hosting a Community Presentation to share updates on their Strategic Plan at 7 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27 at Southwood Jr./Sr. High School, 564 Indiana 124.

Manchester hosts Spartan Smash high school eSports tourney

High school teams across the Midwest are invited to the Spartan Smash Invitational, a first-time eSports competition, set for Saturday, Feb. 29, on the North Manchester campus of Manchester University. Registration will close at 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 28. The tournament bracket will be made available that Saturday morning. Competition is in Flory Auditorium at the Science Center. For more information and registration, visit <https://smash.gg/tournament/spartan-smash-invitational>.

Employers invited to register for Manchester Career Fair

Employers are invited to meet students at the Manchester University career, internship and graduate school fair from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 4, at the upper level of the Jo Young Switzer Center on the North Manchester campus. Setup

begins at 11:30 p.m. with lunch and informal networking. Each employer registered will receive a covered 6-foot table and two chairs. The cost to register is \$40 to \$50, depending on the type of employer. Fair sponsorship is also available for \$150.

For more information and to register, visit <http://bit.ly/MUCareerFair2020>. Employers with questions may email CareerDevelopment@manchester.edu.

'Death by Chocolate' tickets on sale

The Wabash Area Community Theater's winter comedy "Death by Chocolate" will open at 6 p.m. and dinner is at 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7; and doors will open at noon and dinner is at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, March 8 at the Charley Creek Inn. Tickets are on sale now at the Charley Creek Inn reception desk. For more information, call Bruce Rovellstad at 260-330-0543 or Bev Vanderpool at 765-661-8206.

Salute to Ag Dinner to honor 2019 Farm Family of the Year

Grow Wabash County and the Salute to Ag committee have announced that Steve Flack and his family have been selected as the 2019 Farm Family of the Year. They will be recognized for their contributions to the Wabash County agriculture industry during Grow Wabash County's annual Salute to Ag Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 11 at the Heartland REMC, 350 Wedcor Ave. Tickets are \$20 each and sponsorship opportunities are available ranging from \$100 up to \$2,500. Registration may be completed by visiting growwabashcounty.com/events, by emailing info@growwabashcounty.com or calling 260-563-5258.

Komets game to celebrate Wabash County March 13

Wabash County will be the MVP during the third annual

Wabash County Night at the Fort Wayne Komets game at 8:05 p.m. Friday, March 13 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum, 4000 Parnell Ave., Fort Wayne. While supplies last, tickets can be bought for \$15 per ticket at <https://groupmatics.events/event/Wabashcommunity3> or by emailing Mitch Meinholz at mitch@komets.com or by calling 260-482-6812.

Adult mental Health First Aid training planned

Purdue Extension program set for Tuesday, March 17

Purdue Extension will offer Adult Mental Health First Aid training from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 17 at the Wabash REMC Community Room, 350 Wedcor Ave. The Mental Health First Aid program is open to any adult. For more information, visit www.extension.purdue.edu/mhfa or contact Mindy Mayes by email at mayes7@purdue.edu or by phone at 260-663-0661 ext. 1408.

St. Trolley's Day Tour on sale Feb. 14

Visit Wabash County has announced that tickets for the St. Trolley's Day Tour happening on March 14 will be available for purchase beginning at 10 a.m. Friday, Feb. 14. Tour times offered are 6, 6:30 or 7 p.m. and will last about two hours. The St. Trolley's Day Tour is \$25 per person and

all-inclusive. To register for this tour, visit www.VisitWabashCounty.com and click on Tours/Trolley Rental. You may also stop in the Welcome Center at 221 S. Miami St., or call 260-563-7171. Tickets are \$25 per person and is due upon registration. You must be 21 or older to participate in this tour.

Wabash Kiwanis Club's Pancake Day returns in March

The Wabash Kiwanis Club will once again host its annual Pancake Day, which is the local service organization's largest annual fundraiser. The event will take place from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 14 at the Bruce Ingraham building at the Wabash County Fairgrounds, located just off of Gillen Avenue. Tickets will be \$8 at the door and \$7 in advance for those ages 13 years and older, and \$5 at the door and \$4 in advance for children ages 6 to 12 years. Admission for the event will be free for children 5 years and younger.

NMCH to host Smithsonian traveling exhibit

The North Manchester Center for History will be hosting the Smithsonian's traveling exhibit, "Crossroads: Change in Rural America" from March 21 to May 3.

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Forbes: Knicks, at \$4.6 billion, NBA's highest valued team

NEW YORK (AP) — Forbes is listing the average value of NBA franchises over \$2 billion for the first time, a figure that has grown nearly 600 percent in the last decade.

The average NBA franchise is now valued at just over \$2.1 billion, with Forbes saying the New York Knicks — worth \$4.6 billion by the magazine's calculations — ranking atop the league list.

The Los Angeles Lakers were listed with a worth of \$4.4 billion by Forbes, with the Golden State Warriors at \$4.3 billion.

The rest of the top 10: Chicago (\$3.2 billion), Boston (\$3.1 billion), the Los Angeles Clippers (\$2.6 billion), Brooklyn (\$2.5 billion), Houston (\$2.475 billion), Dallas (\$2.4 billion) and Toronto (\$2.1 billion).

Forbes also calculated the revenue of the 30 NBA teams at a combined \$8.8 billion last season, a new record, and forecast it would exceed \$9 billion this season.

Vegas agency allocates \$2.4M to host NFL draft

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Tourism officials in Las Vegas are allocating \$2.4 million to host the NFL draft in April.

The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority board on Tuesday approved the budget for promotions, police, and "marquee event elements," including \$500,000 for contracts to be signed by the authority chief executive, Steve Hill, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reported.

Plans for the April 23-25 draft include closing a central part of the neon-lit Las Vegas Strip near Caesars Palace and setting a red carpet area amid the iconic fountains in front of the Bellagio resort.

Boats will ferry players and VIPs to the stage.

A main viewing area is planned near the High Roller observation wheel next to the Caesars Forum, where teams will make their selections in a conference center the league and city are dubbing Selection Square.

The NFL began moving the draft around in 2015. It has been in Chicago, Philadelphia, Dallas and Nashville, Tennessee.

Submit your news

The *Plain Dealer* is accepting all news, varsity, junior varsity, middle school, elementary school and non-school affiliated recreational sports. To get a brief in the newspaper, please provide final score and any highlights pertaining to the event, including first and last names of participants. Reports must be received by 3 p.m. to make it in the following day's edition. Items may be:

- Emailed to sports@wabashplaindealer.com.
 - Called into 260-225-4523 after 11 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Please do not leave complete results on voice mail.
 - Mailed into *Plain Dealer*, 123 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992.
- Organizations or individuals emailing materials should call the sports department to ensure the information was received. The *Plain Dealer* reserves the right to edit material for length, clarity and/or style, and does not guarantee publication.

TRC action heats up in boys basketball

By JACOB RUDE
sports@wabashplaindealer.com

With the girls' basketball season largely wrapped up outside of another Northfield postseason run, focus turns to the final month of the boys' basketball regular season.

Manchester (8-8) at Peru, Dec. 14, 7:45 p.m.

The Squires have had one of the most exciting Three Rivers Conference (TRC) and regular seasons so far this season. Manchester has had four overtime and two double overtime games on the year, going 1-3 in those games.

The most recent TRC game for the Squires was a double overtime win over Tippecanoe Valley. On Friday, they have a chance to make a big impact in the TRC race against Peru. Wabash sits atop the conference standings with an unbeaten mark while the Tigers are 5-1 on the year and in sole possession of second place.

Interestingly, the series between the two in the last 26 games is tied at 13-13. The last two meetings have been one-point wins with Manchester winning in overtime last season, 47-46, and Peru winning the year prior, 60-59.

Wabash (12-3) at Rochester, Dec. 14, 7:45 p.m.; vs. Warsaw, Dec. 15, 7:45 p.m.

After knocking off Tippecanoe Valley last week, Wabash's final three TRC games will be on the road starting on Friday. The Apaches meet a Rochester side are 9-7 on the year and 3-3 in the conference with losses to Whitko, Tippecanoe Valley and Manchester. Wabash holds win over the latter two teams and is unbeaten on the year in TRC play.

The Apaches have won just three of the last 13 meetings

See **BOYS**, page B2



Jacob Rude / Plain Dealer

Manchester's Weston Hamby brings the ball upcourt during the Squires' game against Wabash earlier this season.

Busch has done it all in NASCAR, except win the Daytona 500

By DAN GELSTON
Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Kyle Busch has partied in victory lane at every NASCAR track from Darlington to Dover, from Bristol to the Brickyard. Busch has even celebrated at Daytona, with a 2008 summer Cup Series victory on his resume, and trophies from races in other series or exhibitions in his collection.

He has yet to take his traditional bow as the confetti flies at the Daytona 500. He is 0 for 14.

Winning the biggest race in NASCAR is the last drop in filling a bucket list of milestones that includes two Cup championships and more than 200 NASCAR victories for one of NASCAR's all-time greats, who is just 34.

If failing to win the Daytona 500 is gnawing at the tempestuous Busch, he's not letting on.

"The whole aspect of having one item not checked is not that big of a deal," Busch said. "It's not going to end my career by any means."

Maybe not, but it would put a tidy bow on a career where Busch really has not much left to prove.

Last season, Busch was agonizingly close to win-

ning the "Great American Race," finishing second in a race where he led inside of 10 laps left. He had another strong chance in 2008 until a late-race miscalculation by a teammate cost him a shot at the Harley J. Earl trophy.

Busch gets another shot Sunday at winning the race that Trevor Bayne, Jamie McMurray and Derrike Cope all managed to figure out.

Busch could move past Rusty Wallace and into ninth on the Cup career wins list if he emerges from the anything-can-happen pack. Among active drivers, Busch's 56 wins and two titles are behind only seven-time champion Jimmie Johnson (83 wins). Busch could become the first repeat Cup champion since Johnson won five straight from 2006-2010.

The good times throughout his career are etched in Busch's Hall of Fame credentials, but the near misses at Daytona are unforgettable.

In 2008, Busch's first season at Joe Gibbs Racing after a complicated breakup at Hendrick Motorsports, a drive toward the finish with teammate Tony Stewart came down to the wire.

Running out front in the

high line, Stewart held off two Penske cars over the final thrilling laps. But as Penske drivers Ryan Newman and Kurt Busch closed in on him, Stewart didn't feel safe running alone without any allies.

At the last second, he dropped low on the track to line up in front of Busch. The JGR teams had planned on winning with teamwork, and Stewart thought he would need Busch to make it to the checkered flag.

The decision backfired in the blink of an eye. Stewart couldn't hook up with Busch fast enough, and the two Penske cars steamrolled past him on the top.

"I think Tony, to want to stick together and work as teammates, took an opportunity to do that with me rather than jumping out and getting in front of the other two that were coming," Busch said. "That took away his Daytona 500. I think it was his to win. But we were right there, and we were right there close and had a fast car, too."

Trying last season to become No. 1 at Daytona, Busch was instead second in the 1-2-3 finish for JGR.

Busch was leading on a restart with nine laps to go and opted to start from the bottom lane after winner and

teammate Denny Hamlin told Busch's crew that they would "race it out" without working together.

Before the final restart, though, Busch said Hamlin wanted to "go back into teammate preservation mode." Busch did some blocking that allowed Hamlin to hold off Joey Logano.

"It hurt not being able to bring home that trophy and for Denny to be able to bring home two, but that's just a part of racing," Busch said. "Hopefully we can get it done this year or whenever, sometime or another, before it's all said and done for myself to be able to at least have one."

Busch's bad luck extends beyond the checkered flag drought. He crashed into a concrete wall in a race the day before the 2015 Daytona 500 and broke his right leg and left foot. Busch was stuck in a hospital bed, the Daytona 500 just a race on TV. Busch withstood multiple surgeries, went through a grueling rehabilitation program and missed only 11 races.

He won the season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway to claim his first title, and hasn't stopped his climb toward the top.

See **BUSCH**, page B2

LeBron among 44 U.S. Olympic basketball team finalists

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

LeBron James is considering a return to the Olympics.

James — a two-time gold medalist and three-time Olympian — was among 44 players announced by USA Basketball on Monday as finalists for the team that will play in the Tokyo Games this summer. James played in 2004, 2008 and 2012, helping the U.S. win gold in his most recent two appearances.

The pool includes 19 players who have won a total of 31 gold medals in either Olympic or World Cup competition for the Americans — including nine players who captured the Olympic title for USA Basketball in Rio de Janeiro four years ago.

"I've always maintained that equity is important," USA Basketball managing director Jerry Colangelo told The Associated Press. "And you earn equity by participating. So, we think they've earned the right to be named to the overall roster for USA Basketball. It's pretty elite. It's a tremendous pot and the good news is they've all said they want to play."

James has played in 68 games for the U.S. national team and has said several times over the past year or so that he is thinking about another Olympics — after sitting out the Rio Games for a variety of reasons. Part of the interest in participating this summer is to have the chance to play for U.S. coach Gregg Popovich of the San Antonio Spurs.

"My name is in the hat. It's always predicated on how my body feels at the end of the season," James said. "I am hoping to make a long playoff run and then where my mind is and where my family's head is. There are a lot of factors."

There will be no tryouts. USA Basketball will pare the list down to a 12-person Olympic team by early June, those decisions to be made by a selection committee — and to be based in part on player availability and health. Training camp will start in early July, potentially as little as two weeks after the end of the NBA Finals. The Olympics start July 24.

"I want to play," said Portland's Damian Lillard, one of the finalists. "I think, looking at my career and all the stuff I want to accomplish before it's over, winning a gold medal at the Olympics is on the list. I was happy to see my name on there, obviously, and hopefully I'll be a part of the team."

USA Basketball officials, including Colangelo and Popovich of the San Antonio Spurs, have met with players in a variety of ways over the past several weeks. Some talks have been directly with players, some with their agents, some with their NBA clubs, sometimes a combination thereof — and, Colangelo noted, there were some instances where players reached out directly to express interest.

If they're on the list, that means USA Basketball is convinced they want to play.

"I feel very good about the response," Colangelo said.

Also included in the pool: 15 of the 16 players from the U.S. who are scheduled to play in Sunday's NBA All-Star Game, and all 12

See **LEBRON**, page B2

SCOREBOARD

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Indiana High School Boys Basketball
Top 10 Teams
The Associated Press Top 10 Indiana high school boys basketball teams, with first-place votes in parentheses, records, rating points and previous rankings:

Class 4A				
	W-L	Pts	Prv	
1. Bloomington South (12)	19-0	240	1	
2. Lawrence North	18-1	210	2	
3. Lawrence Central	17-2	188	3	
4. Chesterton	17-1	139	5	
5. Indianapolis Attucks	15-3	126	6	
6. Lafayette Jeff	18-3	117	4	
7. Munster	17-1	98	NR	
8. Carmel	12-5	84	7	
9. Brownsburg	15-3	60	9	
10. Culver Academy	13-4	47	NR	

Others receiving votes: Indpls Cathedral 46. S. Bend Adams 24. Northridge 23. Ft. Wayne Snider 17. Hamilton Southeastern 8. Jeffersonville 7. Columbus North 6.

Class 3A				
	W-L	Pts	Prv	
1. Silver Creek (11)	17-2	236	1	
2. Danville	16-2	186	2	
3. Heritage Hills	15-3	170	3	
4. Norwell (1)	17-1	159	4	
5. Greensburg	16-2	134	5	
6. Hammond	16-2	132	6	
7. Mishawaka Marian	12-4	106	T7	
8. S. Bend St. Joseph's	12-4	86	9	
9. Sullivan	16-2	84	10	
10. Ev. Bosse	12-5	50	NR	

Others receiving votes: Mississinewa 22. NorthWood 21. Delta 18. Ft. Wayne Luers 13. Indpls Brebeuf 10. Northwestern 7. Indian Creek 6.

Class 2A				
	W-L	Pts	Prv	
1. Linton-Stockton (4)	18-2	206	3	
2. Shenandoah (3)	15-2	205	1	
3. Ft. Wayne Blackhawk (4)	15-3	198	2	
4. S. Decatur (1)	17-1	160	4	
5. Westview	15-3	150	6	
6. University	15-4	110	5	
7. Prairie Hts.	13-3	107	7	
8. Ev. Mater Dei	13-4	75	10	
9. Parke Heritage	16-3	63	NR	
10. Paoli	14-3	55	NR	

Others receiving votes: Tipton 36. S. Spencer 31. Central Noble 30. Indpls Howe 14.

Class 1A				
	W-L	Pts	Prv	
1. Greenwood Christian (8)	18-0	228	1	
2. Gary 21st Century (3)	16-2	204	3	
3. Barr-Reeve (1)	17-1	202	2	
4. Logootee	15-3	158	4	
5. Kouts	17-1	150	5	
6. Lafayette Catholic	14-3	137	6	
7. Providence Cristo Rey	15-3	104	9	
8. N. Davies	11-7	70	10	
9. Covington	12-5	57	NR	
10. Morristown	14-5	54	NR	

Others receiving votes: Bloomfield 28. W. Washington 21. Christian Academy 13. Dubois 7. Tri-Central 7.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

	W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct
Louisville	12	1	.923	21	3	.875
Duke	11	2	.846	21	3	.875
Florida St.	10	3	.769	20	4	.833
Virginia	7	5	.583	15	7	.682
Syracuse	7	5	.583	14	9	.609
NC State	6	6	.500	15	8	.652
Notre Dame	6	6	.500	15	8	.652
Pittsburgh	6	7	.462	15	9	.625
Boston College	6	7	.462	12	50	.500
Virginia Tech	5	8	.385	14	10	.583
Clemson	5	8	.385	11	12	.479
Georgia Tech	5	8	.385	11	13	.458
North Carolina	3	9	.250	10	13	.435
Miami	3	10	.231	11	12	.479
Wake Forest	3	10	.231	10	13	.435

Monday's Game
Duke 70, Florida St. 65
Tuesday's Games
NC State at Syracuse
North Carolina at Wake Forest
Notre Dame at Virginia

Today's Games
Boston College at Miami, 7 p.m.
Louisville at Georgia Tech, 8 p.m.
Clemson at Pittsburgh, 9 p.m.

BIG EAST CONFERENCE					
	Conference			All Games	
	W	L	Pct	W	Pct
Seton Hall	10	1	.909	18	5 .783
Creighton	7	4	.636	18	6 .750
Marquette	7	4	.636	17	6 .739
Villanova	7	4	.636	17	6 .739
Butler	6	5	.545	18	6 .750
Providence	6	5	.545	13	11 .542
Xavier	5	6	.455	16	8 .667
Georgetown	4	7	.364	14	10 .583
St. John's	2	9	.182	13	11 .542
DePaul	1	10	.091	13	11 .542
Tied for 12th					

Today's Games
Xavier at Butler, 6:30 p.m.
Creighton at Seton Hall, 6:30 p.m.
Providence at St. John's, 8:30 p.m.
Marquette at Villanova, 8:30 p.m.

BIG TEN CONFERENCE						
	Conference		All Games			
	W	L	Pct	W	L	Pct
Maryland	9	3	.750	19	4	.826
Penn St.	8	4	.667	18	5	.783
Illinois	8	4	.667	16	7	.696
Iowa	8	5	.615	17	7	.708
Rutgers	8	5	.615	17	7	.708
Michigan St.	8	5	.615	16	8	.667
Purdue	7	6	.538	14	10	.583
Wisconsin	7	6	.538	14	10	.583
Minnesota	6	7	.462	12	11	.522
Indiana	5	7	.417	15	8	.652
Ohio St.	5	7	.417	15	8	.652
Michigan	5	7	.417	14	9	.609
Nebraska	2	10	.167	7	16	.304
Northwestern	1	11	.083	6	16	.273

Tuesday's Games
Penn St. at Purdue
Nebraska at Maryland
Michigan St. at Illinois

Today's Games
Rutgers at Ohio St., 7 p.m.
Michigan at Northwestern, 9 p.m.

Thursday's Game
Iowa at Indiana, 8 p.m.

Monday's Men's Results

EAST
Colgate 79, Boston U. 63
SOUTH
Bethune-Cookman 87, Howard 68
Coppin St. 68, Md.-Eastern Shore 67, OT
Duke 70, Florida St. 65
Florida A&M 79, NC A&T 60
Gardner-Webb 86, High Point 55
Grambling St. 80, Alcorn St. 71
Hampton 80, UNC-Asheville 70
Jackson St. 67, Southern U. 51
Longwood 57, Campbell 56
NC Central 58, Morgan St. 57
Radford 81, Winthrop 77
SC State 100, Delaware St. 86
SC-Upstate 66, Charleston Southern 52

SOUTHWEST
Alabama St. 57, Ark.-Pine Bluff 49
Baylor 52, Texas 45
Texas Tech 88, TCU 42
FAR WEST
Portland St. 83, N. Colorado 71

NASCAR

Daytona 500 Lineup
After Sunday qualifying; race Sunday, Feb. 16
At Daytona International Speedway
Lap length: 2.5 miles
Car number in parentheses
1. (47) Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Chevrolet, 194.582 mph.
2. (88) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, 194.363.
3. (9) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 194.305.
4. (48) Jimmie Johnson, Chevrolet, 193.886.
5. (11) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 193.432.
6. (18) Kyle Busch, Toyota, 192.876.
7. (10) Aric Almirola, Ford, 192.588.
8. (24) William Byron, Chevrolet, 192.443.
9. (95) Christopher Bell, Toyota, 192.234.
10. (20) Erik Jones, Toyota, 192.066.
11. (22) Joey Logano, Ford, 192.033.
12. (4) Kevin Harvick, Ford, 192.025.
13. (14) Clint Bowyer, Ford, 191.873.
14. (41) Cole Custer, Ford, 191.812.
15. (6) Ryan Newman, Ford, 191.693.
16. (21) Matt DiBenedetto, Ford, 191.685.
17. (37) Ryan Preece, Chevrolet, 191.616.
18. (8) Tyler Reddick, Chevrolet, 191.559.
19. (17) Chris Buescher, Ford, 191.555.
20. (42) Kyle Larson, Chevrolet, 191.542.
21. (19) Martin Truex Jr., Toyota, 191.514.
22. (1) Kurt Busch, Chevrolet, 191.278.
23. (2) Brad Keselowski, Ford, 191.270.
24. (34) Michael McDowell, Ford, 191.205.
25. (38) John Hunter Nemechek, Ford, 191.180.

ON THE AIR				
COLLEGE BASKETBALL (MEN'S)				
6:30 p.m.		GOLF		
CBSSN — Xavier at Butler		9 p.m.		
FS1 — Creighton at Seton Hall		GOLF — LPGA: ISPS Handa Australian Open, First Round, Seaton, Australia		
SECN — South Carolina at Georgia		NBA BASKETBALL		
7 p.m.		7:30 p.m.		
BTN — Rutgers at Ohio State		ESPN — Milwaukee at Indiana		
ESPN2 — Alabama at Auburn		10 p.m.		
ESPNNEWS — Connecticut at Southern Methodist		ESPN — LA Lakers at Denver		
ESPNU — George Mason at Virginia Commonwealth		NHL HOCKEY		
8 p.m.		7:30 p.m.		
ACCN — Louisville at Georgia Tech		NBCSN — Montreal at Boston		
8:30 p.m.		10 p.m.		
CBSSN — Providence at St. John's		NBCSN — Calgary at Los Angeles		
FS1 — Marquette at Villanova		TENNIS		
SECN — Florida at Texas A&M		7:30 p.m.		
9 p.m.		TENNIS — ATP: The New York Open, Early Rounds, Unioneale, N.Y.		
BTN — Michigan at Northwestern		3 a.m. (Thursday)		
ESPN2 — Iowa State at Oklahoma		TENNIS — ATP/WTA: Rotterdam-ATP, St. Petersburg-WTA, Hua-Hin-WTA Early Rounds		
ESPNU — Houston at South Florida		6 a.m. (Thursday)		
COLLEGE SOFTBALL		TENNIS — ATP/WTA: Rotterdam-ATP, New York-ATP, St. Petersburg-WTA & Hua-Hin-WTA Early Rounds		
2:30 p.m.				
ACCN — Western Carolina at Clemson				
5 p.m.				
ACCN — Western Carolina at				

26. (36) David Ragan, Ford, 190.876.
27. (12) Ryan Blaney, Ford, 190.658.
28. (77) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, 190.428.
29. (3) Austin Dillon, Chevrolet, 190.384.
30. (13) Ty Dillon, Chevrolet, 190.062.
31. (16) Justin Haley, Chevrolet, 190.018.
32. (43) Bubba Wallace, Chevrolet, 189.510.
33. (62) Brendan Gaughan, Chevrolet, 188.945.
34. (27) Reed Sorenson, Chevrolet, 187.356.
35. (66) Timmy Hill, Ford, 186.625.
36. (96) Daniel Suarez, Toyota, 185.479.
37. (32) Corey LaJoie, Ford, 185.166.
38. (00) Quin Houff, Chevrolet, 183.887.
39. (54) JJ Yeley, Ford, 183.292.
40. (15) Brennan Poole, Chevrolet, 181.781.

Failed to qualify
41. (49) Chad Finchum, Toyota, 181.763.
42. (51) Joey Gas, Chevrolet, 179.756.
43. (52) BJ McLeod, Ford, no speed.

MLB

Remaining Free Agents

AMERICAN LEAGUE

NEW YORK (AP) — The 50 remaining free agents:

BALTIMORE (1) — Mark Trumbo, dh-of-1b.
BOSTON (3) — Andrew Cashner, rhp; Brock Holt, inf-of; Steve Pearce, 1b-of.
CLEVELAND (3) — Ryan Flaherty, inf; Jason Kipnis, 2b; Yasiel Puig, of.
DETROIT (1) — Gordon Beckham, 2b.
HOUSTON (1) — Collin McHugh, rhp.
LOS ANGELES (1) — Trevor Cahill, rhp.
NEW YORK (3) — Cory Gearrin, rhp; Cameron Maybin, of; CC Sabathia, lhp.
SEATTLE (3) — Wade LeBlanc, lhp; Tommy Milone, lhp; Aroldys Vizcaino, rhp.
TEXAS (2) — Wellington Castillo, c; Shawn Kelley, rhp.
TORONTO (1) — Clay Buchholz, rhp.
NATIONAL LEAGUE
ARIZONA (2) — Jarrod Dyson, of; Wilmer Flores, of.
ATLANTA (2) — Brian McCann, c; Josh Tomlin, rhp.
CHICAGO (4) — Tony Barnett, rhp; Xavier Cedeño, lhp; Jonathan Lucroy, c; Ben Zobrist, inf-of.
COLORADO (2) — Yonder Alonso, 1b-of; Drew Butera, c.
LOS ANGELES (2) — David Freese, 3b; Russell Martin, c.
MIAMI (1) — Martín Prado, 1b-3b.
MILWAUKEE (1) — Matt Albers, rhp.
NEW YORK (2) — Rajai Davis, of; Juan Lagares, of.
PHILADELPHIA (6) — Jared Hughes, rhp; Tommy Hunter, rhp; Brad Miller, inf-of; Pat Neshek, rhp; Sean Rodriguez, inf-of; Jason Vargas, lhp.
PITTSBURGH (2) — Melky Cabrera, of; Lonnie Chisenhall, of.
ST. LOUIS (1) — Tony Congrani, lhp.
SAN DIEGO (1) — Aaron Loup, lhp.
SAN FRANCISCO (1) — Fernando Abad, lhp.
WASHINGTON (4) — Brian Dozier, 2b; Jeremy Hellickson, rhp; Fernando Rodney, rhp; Jonny Venters, lhp.

GOLF

World Golf Ranking

Through Feb. 9

1. Rory McIlroy	NIR	9.19
2. Brooks Koepka	USA	9.16
3. Jon Rahm	ESP	8.67
4. Justin Thomas	USA	7.63
5. Dustin Johnson	USA	6.91
6. Patrick Cantlay	USA	6.13
7. Webb Simpson	USA	6.07
8. Tiger Woods	USA	6.05
9. Xander Schauffele	USA	5.73
10. Justin Rose	ENG	5.66
11. Tommy Fleetwood	ENG	5.61
12. Tony Finau	USA	5.04
13. Patrick Reed	USA	4.79
14. Adam Scott	AUS	4.51
15. Louis Oosthuizen	SAF	4.45
16. Gary Woodland	USA	4.37
17. Shane Lowry	IRL	4.32
18. Bryson DeChambeau	USA	4.26
19. Marc Leishman	AUS	4.20
20. Matt Kuchar	USA	4.12
21. Paul Casey	ENG	4.10
22. Bernd Wiesberger	AUT	3.96
23. Hideki Matsuyama	JPN	3.95
24. Francesco Molinari	ITA	3.91
25. Matthew Fitzpatrick	ENG	3.82
26. Rickie Fowler	USA	3.72
27. Henrik Stenson	SWE	3.27
28. Kevin Na	USA	3.20
29. Abraham Ancer	MEX	3.14
30. Lee Westwood	ENG	3.12
31. Danny Willett	ENG	3.02
32. Kevin Kisner	USA	2.89
33. Sungjae Im	KOR	2.87
34. Tyrrell Hatton	ENG	2.85
35. Cameron Smith	AUS	2.83
36. Shugo Imahira	JPN	2.82
37. Billy Horschel	USA	2.74
38. Jason Day	AUS	2.73
39. Matt Wallace	ENG	2.73
40. Jazz Janewattananond	THA	2.72

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Boston	57	34	11	12	80	188	143
Tampa Bay	56	36	15	5	77	201	151
Toronto	56	29	19	8	66	200	187
Florida	55	29	20	6	64	193	185
Montreal	58	27	24	7	61	179	176
Buffalo	56	24	24	8	56	159	177
Ottawa	55	18	26	11	47	147	188
Detroit	57	14	39	4	32	118	213

Metropolitan Division

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Washington	56	36	15	5	77	202
Pittsburgh	54	34	15	5	73	181
N.Y. Islanders	54	32	16	6	70	161
Columbus	57	30	17	10	70	148
Philadelphia	56	31	17	8	69	181
Carolina	55	32	20	3	67	180
N.Y. Rangers	54	27	23	4	58	177
New Jersey	54	20	24	10	50	149

WESTERN CONFERENCE

St. Louis	56	32	15	9	73	178	160
Colorado	54	32	16	6	70	197	154
Dallas	55	31	19	5	67	147	141
Winnipeg	57	29	23	5	63	173	172
Nashville	55	26	22	7	59	178	183
Minnesota	55	26	23	6	58	169	181
Chicago	55	25	22	8	58	163	173

Ex-Cub Hamels eager to fill leadership void on young Braves staff

By **CHARLES ODUM**
Associated Press

ATLANTA — The Atlanta Braves need new veteran leadership for a rotation that has lost Julio Teheran and Dallas Keuchel. Left-hander Cole Hamels is eager to fill the void as pitchers and catchers report to spring training on Wednesday. The 36-year-old Hamels, who signed an \$18 million, one-year deal with Atlanta on Dec. 4, brings much-needed experience to a young rotation that also includes Mike Soroka, Max Fried and Mike Foltynewicz. Soroka, who could be the team’s opening day pitcher,

is only 22. Fried is 26. Foltynewicz is 28. Hamels wants to be a resource for the young starters. He remembers such veterans as Roy Halladay set the example for him when he broke into the major leagues with Philadelphia in 2006. “When I came up I was very fortunate to have an organization that looked into what veteran leadership is,” Hamels said last month. “They surrounded me with some of the best players and pitchers that I could ever been around. Roy Halladay, (Roy) Oswalt, Cliff Lee, Jamie Moyer, those are great guys to learn from and I think it helped me elevate my game and become a bet-

ter pitcher.” Hamels has 163 wins in 14 seasons with the Phillies, Texas Rangers and Chicago Cubs. Almost every starting pitcher in camp is much younger than Hamels. Félix Hernández, the former Seattle standout who will be in camp on a minor league contract as he tries to revive his career, also can be a role model for young pitchers. Hernández, who turns 34 in April, may compete with Sean Newcomb and rookie right-handers Kyle Wright, Ian Anderson and Bryse Wilson for the No. 5 spot in the rotation. “You can’t see it all in this game, but they’ve come pret-

ty close to seeing it all,” Anderson said of Hamels and Hernández. Hamels should be especially helpful for Fried and Newcomb, left-handers who say they can’t wait to watch the veteran work. Fried said Hamels “is the person I’m most frequently compared to.” Fried wants to learn more about Hamels’ changeup. “Obviously, one of his biggest weapons is one I’ve been working on for a long time, so I’m excited to pick his brain on the changeup,” Fried said. Hamels said it’s only fair that he share knowledge from his long career. After all, he said he picked up tips

about pitching mechanics as a kid by watching former longtime Braves left-hander Tom Glavine, another master of the changeup, when most Atlanta games were televised by TBS. “He was somebody I really looked at and wanted to have some similarities,” Hamels said of Glavine. “The changeup was a pitch I knew the importance of. It’s helped me to this day. ... I tried to emulate his mechanics a little bit.” Hamels was 7-7 with a 3.81 ERA in 27 starts with the Cubs last season. He was 6-3 with a 2.98 ERA in the first half before posting a 5.79 ERA in the second half. Hamels said he rushed his

return from an oblique injury last season and won’t make that mistake again. That’s only one of many lessons he said he’s eager to share because “I know where I’m at” as a veteran. “I think that ... I’m hopefully able to introduce some of the experiences I have, what’s really gotten me to where I am today and see if guys can learn from some of the advice that I have,” Hamels said. Pitchers and catchers will have their first workout on Thursday at the Braves’ new spring training home in North Port, Florida. Position players report on Monday and the first full-squad workout is next Tuesday.

Woods unsure whether to repeat as Presidents Cup captain

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP Golf Writer

LOS ANGELES — Ernie Els has made it clear he will not be returning as International captain for the Presidents Cup next year. Tiger Woods was a little more vague. Woods, captain of the U.S. team that won at Royal Melbourne for the eighth straight time, says he spoke with Els while boarding the charter to leave Australia in December. Els gave his International team identity and purpose, and it nearly pulled off a victory until a Sunday rally by Woods and the Americans. “He has set a standard that going forward, they now have a plan,” Woods said Tuesday. “It was tough to see him not want to be part it in that way.” Els will be the first International captain to not repeat since David Graham after the inaugural Presidents Cup in 1994. For the Americans, Woods was the third captain in as many cups, following Jay Haas in 2015 and Steve Stricker in 2017. Complicating matters is that the Presidents Cup and Ryder Cup now work together with a similar group of captains and assistants to build continuity. Still on the horizon for Woods is a Ryder Cup captaincy. “I’m struggling with the same issues,” he said of a decision to repeat, “because as an American, we have two Cups we’re involved in, not just every other year. So the responsibilities on an American are a little bit more.” The tour is likely to decide on the next two captains in the spring.

REALITY CHECK

Keith Mitchell can think of only two times when he felt he couldn’t beat another player, and they happened two weeks apart at consecutive tournaments he played. The first was at Bethpage Black when he played a practice round with Brooks Koepka on the eve of the PGA Championship. “I felt like I was playing pretty good,” Mitchell said. “I finished top 10 in Charlotte, made the cut in Dallas. And then I was playing with Brooks and I was like, ‘I can’t beat this guy.’ I have never stepped on the tee on Thursday and felt like I was playing for second until I played that Wednesday with Brooks.” Koepka and Mitchell were separated by less than a yard in driving distance the previous season. Not that day. “His swing that week, he looked like he was swinging 50 percent. It was dead straight going further than mine,” Mitchell said. “It was a laser beam down the fairway. He would hit it down the middle, hit it at the flag. He wasn’t worried about course management. He did not even pull out a yardage book. Why would he ever look left or right?”

Koepka opened with rounds of 63-65. If it’s any consolation, Koepka later said it was the best two rounds he ever played. Two weeks later, Mitchell was paired with Tiger Woods in the final round at Memorial, and Mitchell again felt overwhelmed. “When he was 7 under through 12, he should have been 12 under through 12. I thought he was going to come back and win and shoot 60,” Mitchell said. Mitchell shot 76 that day at the Memorial. He missed the cut at the PGA Championship. “I was playing decent,” he said. “I was thinking two weeks later that I was being harder on myself comparing myself to them. Someone told me, ‘Tiger is the best player to ever hold a club in his hand. Brooks is the No. 1 player in the world.’ It’s fine to compare yourself, but don’t let that be a negative.”

NEW NO. 1

Rory McIlroy is back at No. 1 in the world for the first time since September 2015. This is his 96th week at No. 1, and he needs one more week to match Nick Faldo as the most weeks by a European player. That’s no small task. McIlroy, Brooks Koepka and Jon Rahm could all end the week at No. 1 in the world, without having to win the Genesis Invitational. For McIlroy, it’s his eighth time reaching the top of the ranking, and the third straight time he got there without having played the previous week. Meanwhile, Koepka losing the No. 1 ranking means that not since Tiger Woods in 2009 will a player have kept the No. 1 for an entire calendar year.

POWELL HONORED

Renee Powell has been selected to receive the Charlie Bartlett Award by the Golf Writers Association of America for unselfish contributions to better society. It’s the latest honor for the 73-year-old Powell, who also is in the PGA of America Hall of Fame and was honored in 2003 by the PGA as its “First Lady of Golf.” She learned the game at Cleaview Golf Club in Ohio the course her father, William, built after returning from World War II and struggled to find a place where blacks could play. Powell became the second black to play on the LPGA Tour and contributed even more to the game after she stopped competing. She launched Clearview H.O.P.E. (Helping Our Patriots Everywhere), which offered a recreational golf program free for female veterans. She has made 25 trips to Africa to host clinics. She was among the first women to become members of the R&A, and she

received an honorary doctorate at St. Andrews. The university even named a residence hall in her honor. “My life has been one that I never dreamed of,” Powell said. “I look back on my life, when I was 8 years old and discovered racism in school, from teachers and kids in my little community. ... Now I have a building named after me in St. Andrews. It’s all because of golf.”

CHAPPELL COMING AROUND

Kevin Chappell is more satisfied with baby steps than one giant leap. He tied for 25th last week at Pebble Beach for his best result since he returned – a little too early, in hindsight – from surgery on his back at the end of 2018. The giant leap? That took place last fall. Chappell had a few warmup events on the Korn Ferry Tour and then played in his first PGA Tour event in 10 months at The Greenbrier. He shot 59 in the second round, only to follow with rounds of 73-72 to tie for 47th. That was too low to even earn world ranking points. The 59 was at least evidence he had it, though Chappell knew better. “I wasn’t able to practice,” he said. “I was able to play 72 holes, which was the test, but I didn’t hit range balls. In a dream world, you want to be that good to where you don’t need to practice. But it is pretty important. Now I’m able to work on it and sharpen the tools.”

DIVOTS

Phil Mickelson said on Twitter he will not play the Mexico Championship next week even if he were to get inside the top 50 in the world after Riviera because his kids are on spring break. This is Mickelson’s fifth straight event, which included a trip to Saudi Arabia. Mickelson won in Mexico City two years ago. ... Charl Schwartzel tied for fifth at Pebble Beach and picked up 96 FedEx Cup points. Schwartzel, who missed seven months last year with a wrist injury, is on a medical extension and was given 12 starts to earn 262 points to retain his full PGA Tour card. He has 10 events left. ... Jordan Spieth closed with a 67 at Pebble Beach, the first time since August he broke 70 in the final round.

STAT OF THE WEEK

Phil Mickelson has at least one top 10 on the PGA Tour each of the last 30 years, the third-longest streak in history behind Sam Snead (34 years) and Raymond Floyd (32 years).

FINAL WORD

“Bending, twisting, turning, moving. Other than that, I’m all good.” – Tiger Woods, on which body movement causes the most inconsistency in his swing.

Swedish star fronts skateboarding’s move to mainstream

By **STEVE DOUGLAS**
Associated Press

MALMO, Sweden — Oskar Rozenberg nonchalantly drifts around the skate park before unleashing a series of high-energy tricks – mounting a wall, sliding down a railing with his arms outstretched, vaulting a stairwell, accelerating into a ramp and giving it some air. “I’m just warming up,” the two-time skateboarding world champion and Olympic hopeful says over his shoulder as he floats away. His long, dark hair flowing beneath his black cap and over his hoodie, the 23-year-old Rozenberg is in his element – and in his own world – as he seeks out every line, every dip and every hollow of the indoor park to satisfy his creative needs. He gets particularly excited talking about his current favorite trick, the backside nose blunt. “You go up on the edge of the quarter pipe, you do a backside 180 turn and you land on the nose. Then you pop in, back into the transition,” Rozenberg said. “It’s such a flowy trick. It’s just vibey.” If that’s akin to a foreign language, it might not be six months from now. Skateboarding is coming to the Olympics for the first time at this year’s Tokyo Games and Rozenberg, a stand-out Swede in a field mostly dominated by Americans and Brazilians, might be its breakout star. “Osiki,” as he is fondly referred to, is a skateboarder best known for his outrageous creativity and for thinking on his feet – or, in his case, his wheels. He will arrive in Tokyo as the world champion of the Vans Park Series Pro Tour after his win in Salt Lake City in September.

“He is spontaneous,” said John Magnusson, who works for the Swedish Skateboard Association and will be Rozenberg’s coach in the run-up to the Tokyo Games. “He maybe has the first two tricks planned and then he goes for whatever. When Osiki flows it all together, he is unbeatable because he is that good.” Rozenberg’s strength may yet prove to be his weakness when it comes to the Olympics. The edgy, rebellious, somewhat underworld pursuit of skateboarding is about to enter the mainstream, joining the more structured world of traditional sports. It will freshen up the Olympics, for sure, and appeal more to younger viewers, but will the popularization of skateboarding mean it loses its counter-cultural status? There are also concerns that judging in the Olympics will be more about box-ticking rather than a desire for expression and creativity, potentially dampening its appeal – and the medal chances of Rozenberg, with his off-the-cuff style. He thinks, however, that skateboarding being added to the Olympic program has “more positives than negatives.” “It pushes the sport into a different direction it hasn’t really been in before,”

Rozenberg said. “It’s kind of new territory. “A lot of other sports are about jumping a centimeter longer or a centimeter higher than what you did last year. But skateboarding is the opposite of that. There is so much you can do. I think it will actually bring a new aspect to sports.” Rozenberg first came across skateboarding at the age of 9, when he was on a bike ride with his father and bumped into friends at the newly built skate park in Malmo – Stapelbaddsparken. He tried it out, went back the next day, and “was there every day for four years.” “I think what attracted me the most was the group of people and how everyone took care of each other, and how all of a sudden I was able to hang out with people five or 10 years older than me,” Rozenberg said. “There wasn’t an age barrier. Everyone was just hanging out.” He liked the easy-going nature of skateboarding. “When I was playing football, I remember being a bit sick of it, always having to come to practice on time and do this or that in practice,” he said. “Skateboarding was the complete opposite ... It’s like everything was on your own conditions.” Rozenberg attended a one-of-a-kind high school – Bryggeriets Gymnasium – that had skateboarding on the curriculum and was located inside one of the top skate parks in Malmo. Rozenberg said this background means he has a “different story” to the big skaters from America who grew up in California and had “all the best skate spots, all the best parks, all the contacts that you need in terms of sponsors.” “I think a lot of skaters who are coming up right now who are from Europe are adding a new dimension to skateboarding,” he said. “The skate spots here are so different to the skate spots in America, so that naturally forms a different environment, a different type of skater.”

Rozenberg’s idols include Tony Hawk, a skateboard pioneer from the 1980s who had a series of computer games – one of which Rozenberg remembers completing on one New Year’s Eve. Another is modern-day American skater Grant Taylor. “He was the coolest guy in my eyes,” Rozenberg said of Taylor. “Some skaters only specify in one skating but he did it all. His style is unexplainable.” Up-and-coming skaters might be saying similar things about Rozenberg, whose imaginative routines put him among the world’s most popular competitors and likely attracted him to Nike, one of his many sponsors. “I try to put together a line in my head,” he explains as he goes through his typical routine. “It might be a line I have been thinking about as I was standing on the platform, like ‘Oh, that could be cool to do that there.’ Or it might be a line I actually did, a line I stumbled upon and I was like, ‘Oh, that was a really good line.’

Is figure skating becoming acrobatics on ice?

By **BARRY WILNER**
Associated Press

There are times when Brian Boitano marvels at what he sees on the ice. And there are times – far too many times nowadays – when he shakes his head and wonders where figure skating is headed. Boitano was one of the sport’s greats as a competitor, winning four straight U.S. titles, two world championships and the 1988 Olympic gold medal in a memorable showdown with Brian Orser that people still talk about today. One of the best jumpers America has developed, but in a time when triples were the currency, Boitano also had a flair artistically and incredible stamina. Working in the old 6.0 scoring system, he often came close to perfection. The programs he now witnesses are anything but perfect. Blame the points method adopted soon after the 2002 Olympics judging scandal. And the adjustments made to that system that emphasize difficult jumps – yes, quads

– and squeezing all sorts of elements into a program. That’s created, in some instances, acrobatics on the rink. “Skating has always been a jumping contest in some respect,” Boitano says. “What’s really disturbing is looking at, literally, these little Russian girls doing all these quads. Can their bodies handle it? “We always tried to make the creative side just as important as the jumps, so it was the mark that had the importance. That’s not the case anymore.” With a reduction in the length of the free skate, Boitano sees artistry being curtailed even more. “You can’t take away 30 seconds and then expect programs to be as full,” he said. “What will they take out of the programs to pack in everything, all the elements, the jumps and spins and footwork? It will be the artistry, the parts of a program that really connect with the audience.” Tara Lipinski, the 1998 gold medalist at the Nagano Games who retired early due to injuries, also has concerns about

the current makeup of figure skating. She recognizes that all sports advance, usually meaning tougher challenges getting to the top. “We’re in a place where you just don’t know what’s possibly ahead,” Lipinski says. “But there’s been progress in knowledge about how you train and how much, and knowing your body. “Yes, the jumps they are doing could be really hard on the bodies, but we just don’t know yet. And you can’t generalize.” Adds her NBC broadcast partner, former three-time U.S. champion Johnny Weir: “There’s not one skater I know who has not had an injury.” Weir is comfortable with how many quadruple jumps the men attempt per program – two-time world champion Nathan Chen, who last month won his fourth consecutive American title, did six at the Pyeongchang Olympics. That the women, especially nearly every skater the Russians send to senior competitions, are doing several quads per free skate is, Weir says, “mind-boggling stuff.”

Mom fears teen dating drama will lead to principal’s office

DEAR ABBY: I’ve got a new one for you. My beautiful 16-year-old daughter was interested in a boy her age from school. He was interested in her, too. He told her he wanted to date her, but that he is “polyamorous” and would be dating many girls simultaneously. She told him he’s too young to know what he is yet, and he was just using it as an excuse to date multiple girls, and she wasn’t interested.

They are part of the same friend group. He has been acting very hurt, pouty and angry. He told a mutual friend he is “deeply hurt” he came out to my daughter and that she won’t accept him as he is. I’m worried this will escalate, and he will claim that she shamed him for this.

Abby, I am all about supporting how people self-identify, but this is absolutely ridiculous. What are your thoughts? Is this the new normal? If you refuse to date a boy who dates a ton of other girls simultaneously, does that make you guilty of shaming? Personally, I think it’s hilarious that this is the new excuse to be promiscuous and so does she, but I won’t be laughing if we get called into the principal’s office.

– Not Funny In Colorado

DEAR NOT FUNNY: That boy is sulking because his pitch didn’t sell. Polyamory is the practice of openly engaging in multiple intimate relationships with the consent of ALL the people involved. What that boy may have meant was he enjoys “playing the field.” Your daughter didn’t discriminate; she showed good common sense. If the principal hears about it, the administrator not only won’t call your daughter into the office, I’m pretty sure the person will get a chuckle out of this.

DEAR ABBY: Our brother-in-law made a terrible mistake and is now serving time. My younger sister, “Tess,” and I have visited him on a few occasions. We support him by listening and have told him that although he made a horrible mistake, he has to move forward.

Well, something happened that has put a damper on things. This brother-in-law sent Tess a letter, and in it he confessed to her that he had a dream, and she was in it. It wasn’t a horrible letter, but I believe it was very inappropriate. He alluded to the fact that it was a sexual dream.

Tess has asked me if she should let our older sister, “Jane,” know what her husband wrote. Jane has been through so much, so I told Tess it would not be a good idea to disclose it and add to her misery. Tess says it isn’t fair to her to have to swallow this pill for the sake of not making waves. She feels Jane should know what kind of man her husband is. Abby, Jane knows exactly what kind of man she has. Part of what he did wrong was have a cyber affair.

Should Tess inform Jane that her husband has been inappropriate? She now refuses to visit our brother-in-law and has basically written him off. Please give me your opinion and advice. – Torn Up Over This In Texas

DEAR TORN UP: Tess is right. It appears incarceration hasn’t discouraged your brother-in-law from writing inappropriate material to inappropriate recipients. Tess should not be discouraged from informing Jane about what her husband has done and showing her the letter, if it is still in her possession. Jane has a right to know. Please respect that Tess needs to distance herself from this troubled individual and his fantasies, and don’t encourage her to visit him again. In light of what’s happened, I’m not sure you should either.

Dear Abby



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Livy contemporary
- 5 Tobacco plugs
- 10 Low-budget film (hyph.)
- 12 Christie sleuth
- 13 Plan
- 14 Traffic circle
- 15 Men’s accessories
- 16 Italian writer
- 18 Sault — Marie
- 19 Feminine principle
- 21 Nash of humorous poems
- 25 An antiseptic
- 29 San Antonio landmark
- 30 Honshu port
- 32 Longest bone
- 33 Ward off
- 34 Term papers
- 37 Lacks

38 Laments shrilly

- 40 Tai language
- 43 — Paulo, Brazil
- 44 Brief letter
- 48 Reanimated corpse
- 50 Uneath (2 wds.)
- 52 Shuns
- 53 Chant
- 54 Lap dogs
- 55 Dingbat

DOWN

- 1 Former Atlanta stadium
- 2 Show of hands
- 3 Folksinger
- 4 Uproar
- 5 Cote
- 6 Sellouts
- 7 Was, to Caesar
- 8 Became frayed
- 9 Pigpen
- 10 Harness part
- 11 Shangri-la
- 12 Ad

Answer to Previous Puzzle

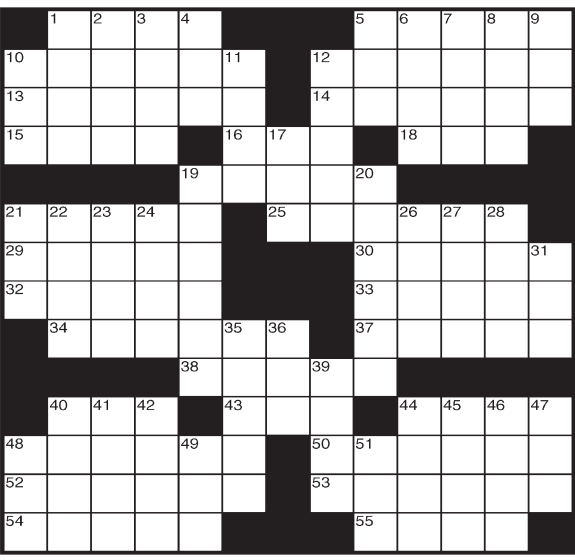
W H E T R O B A T M
A U R A T E E C R A B
S T A M M E R S D O J O
E O S T Y C O O N
L E A R N F I R P R Y
P A D A V E R S E
G R A B O A R E A S T
A L M A I R E K I L O
R E C E D E D O M
M I A R E D V I E W S
I N F O R M B I N
S L I D A D E L A I D E
T E R I I N D N O I R
T E N L A S E N D S

17 A fifth of DX

- 19 Parka
- 20 Makes pretty
- 21 Clumsy one
- 22 Merriment
- 23 Stops up
- 24 Rhea cousins
- 26 Aha! (2 wds.)
- 27 Back of the neck
- 28 Made do with
- 31 Hirt and Gore
- 35 Words of approval
- 36 Body of water

39 Rule of thumb

- 40 Feel great affection
- 41 In a frenzy
- 42 Stage award
- 44 Prohibition (hyph.)
- 45 Klempere or Preminger
- 46 Istanbul resident
- 47 Pollution control org.
- 48 Ray gun blast
- 49 Freudian subjects
- 51 Acorn bearer



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SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

			4	2			6	
	7	6		9	3	2	1	
	3			1			5	7
		3			4		7	
7		8		3		6		5
	5		7			1		
8	6			7			2	
	2	1	8	4		7	9	
	4			6	2			

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How to play: Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

PREVIOUS SOLUTION

6	2	8	3	7	5	4	9	1
3	5	4	8	9	1	2	6	7
1	7	9	4	2	6	3	8	5
4	8	7	1	6	9	5	2	3
9	1	5	7	3	2	8	4	6
2	6	3	5	8	4	7	1	9
7	3	1	6	4	8	9	5	2
5	4	2	9	1	7	6	3	8
8	9	6	2	5	3	1	7	4

JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

T F E A R

□ □ □ □ □

N U U C T

□ □ □ □ □

R I F A M F

□ □ □ □ □

S M E E A S

□ □ □ □ □

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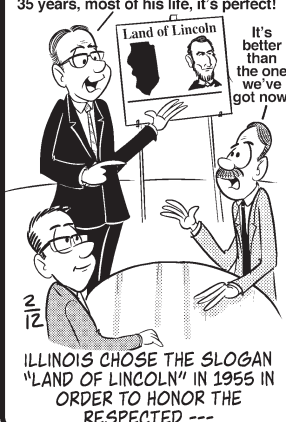
Print your answer here: □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Yesterday’s Jumbles: CLUMP HOARD MAINLY CAVITY

Answer: It was easy raising funds for his business because investors wanted to — ACCOMPANY HIM

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

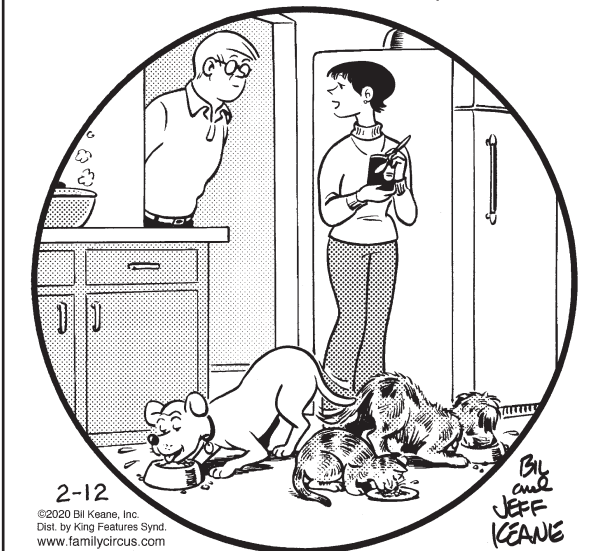


Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane

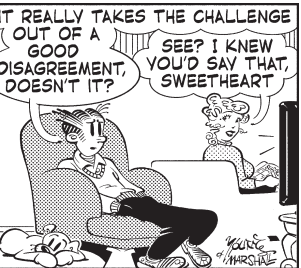


“This is the first sitting. You have reservations for the second.”

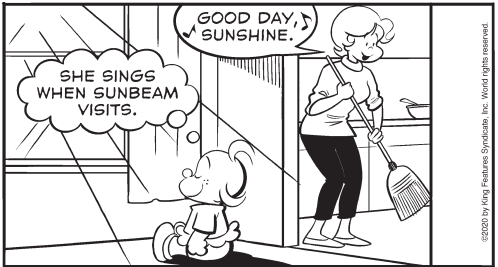
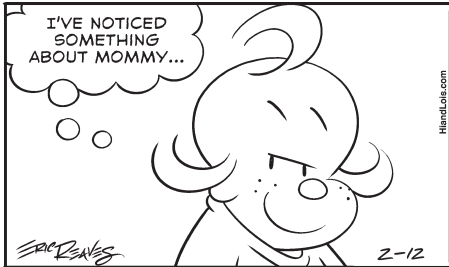
BEETLE BAILEY



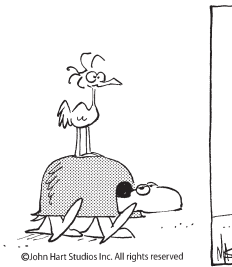
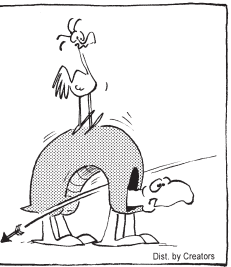
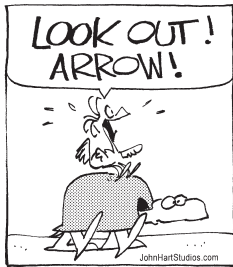
BLONDIE



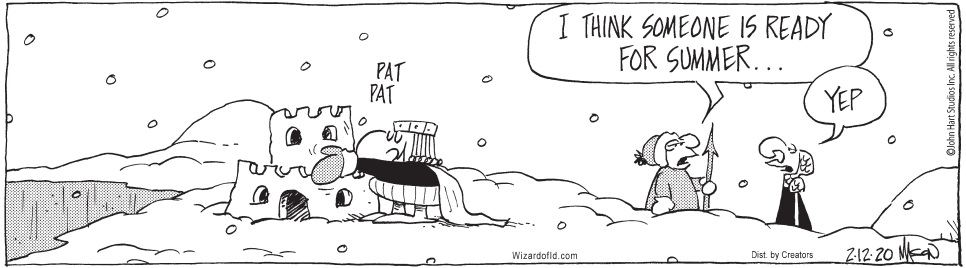
HI & LOIS



BC



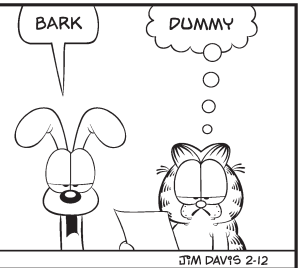
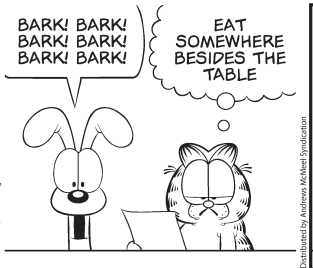
WIZARD OF ID



DILBERT



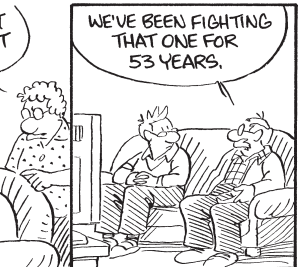
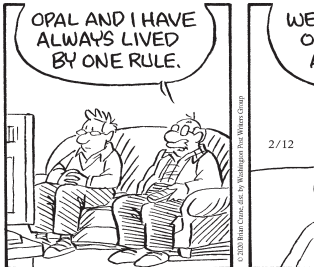
GARFIELD



FORT KNOX



PICKLES



All of mankind sits on death row

From the writings of the Rev. Billy Graham

Q: I do not like to attend funerals and I am glad that people are getting away from these morbid gatherings. When our society is in desperate need of more happiness than sadness, why are there still people who insist that death should be respected when it brings so much sadness? — F.D.

A: This present age is definitely not an age of mourning. Instead, people deliberately turn away from anything unpleasant, determined to fill their lives with those things which will divert their minds from anything serious. In their preoccupation with momentary pleasures and diversions, people settle for shallow and empty substitutes for reality. Millions give more thought

to the next entertainment to seek. Perhaps much of it is to help put off dealing with the finality of what really happens when death comes knocking.

The present culture could be known as “the culture of superficiality.” The popular phrases of “so what” or “whatever” describe the attitude of many toward life. Many think that so long as we have automobiles to ride in, TV and movies to entertain us, mobile devices at hand, and gadgets to serve us, what happens to our souls does not matter. The idea of, “Laugh,

and the world laughs with you; weep, and you weep alone,” is all too familiar. But superficial living will never help us stand against the pressures and problems of life.

While Jesus came to bring life abundantly (John 10:10), we cannot ignore the fact that all of mankind sits on death row. How we die or when we die is not the main issue, but where we go after death. For those who know Christ, death is a time of celebration, that souls redeemed will be united with the Lord forever in eternity.

CELEBRITY CIPHER

Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

“ F P D N V I G J C . . . G N V C J C S U X V U I M V I
G L G F Z G I V X I M F O J X I G O A J T I V C I
X D R B F N I Z M G N M Z F V X V A F J A S F N V C
R F C Y V Y F P G C . ” — V R F S G C N J S C

Previous Solution: “I definitely want to record an album, direct a film and start my own religion.” — Robert Pattinson

TODAY’S CLUE: f s j e n b e g

Trump campaigns as a 2nd Amendment warrior

By AAMER MADHANI
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — After the Parkland school shooting in Florida two years ago, President Donald Trump chided Republican lawmakers for being too “scared” of the National Rifle Association to tighten gun laws — then backed away from the idea.

After back-to-back mass shootings in Ohio and Texas in 2019, Trump embraced calls for “strong background checks” — only to backpedal once again.

Now, as he primes the

pump on his 2020 reelection effort, Trump is going all-in on embracing the mantle of gun rights champion, a stark turn from earlier moments in his presidency when he toyed with the idea of pushing Congress to enact stricter gun laws.

There was no public discussion of tighter gun laws when Trump welcomed Parkland families to the White House for a private meeting on Monday, four days before the two-year anniversary of the rampage that left 17 dead. Instead, administration officials unveiled a website intended to help

educators, parents and law enforcement address threats to school safety.

In recent weeks, Trump has repeatedly warned supporters at his rallies that Democrats “will take your guns away.” Last month, he labeled Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam a “whack job” as gun rights advocates protested the Democratic governor’s moves to tighten gun laws in the aftermath of a mass shooting in Virginia Beach.

Drawing a straight line from gun rights to presidential politics, Trump tweeted that Democrats in the state “will take your guns away. Repub-

licans will win Virginia in 2020. Thank you Dems!”

And on Monday night, as he came to the apex of an hourlong campaign speech in New Hampshire, Trump framed his supporters’ Second Amendment right to bear arms as being as precious as the rights to privacy, free speech and religious freedom.

Campaign officials believe the effort could help put states like Minnesota, New Mexico and New Hampshire in play. For that to happen, Trump will need to draw even more rural and white men to the polls — key groups that

helped drive his 2016 surprise victory.

Trump’s advisers believe his consistent efforts to spotlight his credentials as a Second Amendment warrior can help him draw a contrast with the eventual Democratic presidential nominee. The top tier of Democratic candidates have made bolstering gun restrictions a key part of their platforms.

Mike Bloomberg, a former New York City mayor, has poured millions of dollars from his own fortune into supporting a series of gun control advocacy groups. Former Vice President Joe

Biden served as the Obama administration’s point man on the president’s failed push for sweeping gun reform laws following the Sandy Hook school shooting in Connecticut. Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who got a D- grade from the NRA, has been knocked by fellow Democrats for not being tough enough on gun restrictions.

“Democrats have shown they don’t respect the Second Amendment, which will be one of many contrasts drawn during the campaign,” Trump campaign spokesman Tim Murtaugh said.

Official: Sudan to hand over al-Bashir for genocide trial

By SAMY MAGDY
Associated Press

CAIRO — Sudan’s transitional authorities have agreed to hand over ousted autocrat Omar al-Bashir to the International Criminal Court to face trial on charges of war crimes and genocide, a top Sudanese official said Tuesday, in a deal with rebels to surrender all those wanted in connection with the Darfur conflict.

For a decade after his indictment, al-Bashir con-founded the court based in The Hague, Netherlands. He not only was out of reach during his 30 years in power in Khartoum, but he also traveled abroad frequently to visit friendly leaders without fear of arrest. He even attended the 2018 World Cup in Russia, where he kicked a soccer ball playfully during an airport welcome ceremony and watched matches from luxury seating.

The military overthrew al-Bashir in April 2019 amid massive public protests of his rule, and he has been jailed in Khartoum since then. Military leaders initially ruled out surrendering him to The Hague, saying he would be tried at home.

But the joint military-civilian Sovereign Council that has ruled Sudan since last summer has agreed with rebel groups in Darfur to hand over those wanted by the ICC to face justice in The Hague, according to Mohammed Hassan al-Taishi, a member of the council and a government negotiator.

He didn’t mention al-Bashir by name, but said, “We agreed that everyone who had arrest warrants issued against them will appear before the ICC. I’m saying it very clearly.”

He did not say when they would be handed over.

“We can only achieve justice if we heal the wounds with justice itself,” he said. “We cannot escape from confronting that.”

He spoke at a news conference in South Sudan’s capital, Juba, where the government and multiple rebel groups are holding talks to end the country’s various civil wars, including Darfur.

In the Darfur conflict, rebels from the territory’s ethnic central and sub-Saharan African community launched an insurgency in 2003, complaining of oppression by the Arab-dominated government in Khartoum.

The government responded with a scorched-earth assault of aerial bombings and unleashed militias known as the Janjaweed, who are accused of mass killings and rapes. Up to 300,000 people were killed and 2.7 million were driven from their homes.

Al-Bashir, 76, faces three counts of genocide, five counts of crimes against humanity and two counts of war crimes for his alleged role in leading the deadly crackdown. The indictments were issued in 2009 and 2010, marking the first time the global court had charged a suspect with genocide.

The ICC has indicted two

other senior figures in his regime: Abdel-Rahim Muhammad Hussein, interior and defense minister during much of the conflict, and Ahmed Haroun, a senior security chief at the time and later the leader of al-Bashir’s ruling party. Both have been under arrest in Khartoum since al-Bashir’s fall. Also indicted were Janjaweed leader Ali Kushayb and a senior Darfur rebel leader, Abdullah Banda, whose whereabouts are not known.

Al-Taishi also said that the transitional authorities and the rebels agreed on establishing a special court for Darfur crimes that would include crimes investigated by the ICC.

ICC spokesman Fadi Al Abdallah said the court had no comment until it received confirmation from Sudanese authorities. However, he said the country would not have to ratify the court’s founding treaty, the Rome Statute, before sending al-Bashir to The Hague.

“There is an obligation for Sudan to cooperate” with the court’s arrest warrants, he said. “The ratification of the Rome Statute itself is not a requirement for the surrender of suspects.”

Another member of the Sovereign Council said the government delegation to the Juba talks has a “green light” from military leaders in the council, including its head, Gen. Abdel Fattah Burhan, to announce that Sudan will hand over al-Bashir.

“We want to reassure the armed groups that we are serious and want to achieve peace as soon as possible,” he said.

The Sovereign Council member also said any extradition “might take months,” because he is wanted for other crimes in Sudan related to the “revolution” and the Islamist-backed military coup in 1989. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the media.

The decision could face a backlash from within Sudan’s military, from which al-Bashir emerged, and also from Islamists in the country.

Al-Bashir’s lawyer, Mohammed al-Hassan, warned that handing him over would have “dire political and security repercussions” for Sudan. He said he hoped Burhan “keeps his obligation that al-Bashir or any Sudanese won’t be handed over to the International Criminal Court.”

“This matter will not happen easily,” he told the AP by phone.

Handing over al-Bashir is a sensitive issue in Sudan as the country tries to steer toward democratic and economic reforms. The deputy head of the Sovereign Council, Gen. Mohammed Hammad Dagalo, commands a paramilitary unit that was involved in crushing the Darfur insurgency. The transitional government is under pressure to end its wars with rebel groups as it seeks to rehabilitate the battered economy, attract much-needed foreign aid and deliver the democracy it promises.

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE and JONATHAN LEMIRE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Michael Bloomberg is under fire for resurfaced comments in which the Democratic presidential candidate says the way to bring down murder rates is to “put a lot of cops” in minority neighborhoods because that’s where “all the crime is.”

The billionaire and former New York City mayor made the comments at a 2015 appearance at the Aspen Institute, as part of an overall defense of his support for the controversial “stop and frisk” policing tactic that has been found to disproportionately affect minorities.

Bloomberg launched his presidential bid late last year with an apology for his support for the policy. He’s taking an unconventional approach to the campaign, bypassing the traditional early states and gaining attention by flooding the airwaves with hundreds of millions of dollars in ads. He’s spent recent days courting black voters

whose support will be crucial to winning the Democratic nomination and will begin a campaign swing through the South on Wednesday.

Seeking to blunt any political fallout from the comments, Bloomberg said Tuesday the remarks “do not reflect my commitment to criminal justice reform and racial equity.”

But the audio of his Aspen speech highlights his embrace of the policy just a few years ago and suggests he was aware of the disproportionate impact of stop and frisk on minorities. Bloomberg says that “95 percent” of murders and murder victims are young male minorities and that “you can just take the description, Xerox it and pass it out to all the cops.” To combat crime, he says, “put a lot of cops where the crime is, which means in minority neighborhoods.”

In the audio, he acknowledges that focusing police forces in minority neighborhoods means minorities are disproportionately arrested for marijuana possession but dismisses that as a necessary consequence. “Why do we do

it? Because that’s where all the crime is,” Bloomberg said.

And to “get the guns out of the kids’ hands,” Bloomberg says, police must “throw ’em against the wall and frisk ’em.”

“And they say, ‘Oh, I don’t want that. I don’t wanna get caught.’ So they don’t bring the gun,” he says.

According to a report in the Aspen Times that year, Bloomberg blocked the release of video of the Aspen Institute appearance. But the Aspen Times reporter uploaded what appears to be the full audio online, and it drew renewed attention Monday after podcaster Benjamin Dixon circulated it on Twitter.

In his Tuesday statement, Bloomberg notes that he “inherited the practice of stop and frisk” from Rudy Giuliani’s administration and noted that by the time he left office at the end of 2013, he had significantly reduced its use. He said, “I should have done it faster and sooner.”

But stop and frisk expanded dramatically on Bloomberg’s watch, reaching a peak in 2011 when over 685,000 peo-

ple were stopped, according to data from the American Civil Liberties Union. While its use declined significantly after that, Bloomberg stood by the program even in the face of widespread criticism and legal challenges.

Bloomberg has since distanced himself from the policy since launching his presidential campaign as part of a broader strategy aimed at appealing to minority voters. He’s also acknowledged his own white privilege and released policies focused on issues central to some African American communities, like black homeownership and maternal mortality rates.

But the comments gave Bloomberg’s political rivals an opportunity to pounce. Activist Tom Steyer, who is working aggressively to attract black voters in South Carolina ahead of that state’s Feb. 29 primary, called the comments “extremely disturbing.”

“The racist stereotypes he uses have no place today, and anyone running for the presidential nomination should disavow them,” Steyer said.

China still mostly closed down as virus deaths pass 1,000

By JOE MCDONALD
Associated Press

BEIJING — The daily death toll in China from a new virus topped 100 for the first time, pushing the total fatalities above 1,000 Tuesday as the World Health Organization announced a new name for the disease caused by the virus.

Despite the official end of the extended Lunar New Year holiday, China remained mostly closed for business as many remained at home, with some 60 million people under virtual quarantine.

In Geneva, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus announced a new name for the disease caused by the virus — COVID-19 — saying officials wanted to avoid stigmatizing any geographic location, group of people or animal that might be linked to the disease and to make it clear it was a new coronavirus discovered in 2019.

“Having a name matters to prevent the use of other names that can be inaccurate or stigmatizing. It also gives us a standard format to use for any future coronavirus outbreaks,” the WHO chief said, adding that the name was agreed upon by officials at WHO, the World Organization for Animal Health and the Food and Agriculture Organization.

Here are the latest developments:

Provincial health officials sacked

With the death toll reaching 1,016 in mainland China and no end in sight, heads are beginning to roll.

While no central government-level officials have lost their jobs, state media reported Tuesday that the top health officials in Hubei province, home to the epicenter of Wu-

han, have been relieved of their duties.

No reasons were given, although the province’s initial response was deemed slow and ineffective. Speculation that higher-level officials could be sacked has simmered, but doing so could spark political infighting and be a tacit admission that the Communist Party dropped the ball.

The virus outbreak has become the latest political challenge for the party and its leader, Xi Jinping, who despite accruing more political power than any Chinese leader since Mao Zedong, has struggled to handle crises on multiple fronts. These include a sharply slowing domestic economy, the trade war with the U.S. and pushback on China’s increasingly aggressive foreign policies.

A total of 42,638 virus infections have been recorded on the Chinese mainland.

Major challenges ahead

Zhong Nanshan, a leading Chinese epidemiologist, said that while the virus outbreak in China may peak this month, the situation at the center of the crisis remains more challenging.

“We still need more time of hard working in Wuhan,” he said of the central Chinese city where the outbreak started.

Speaking by teleconference to doctors in Wuhan, Zhong said the priority is to separate the infected from the healthy in their city.

“We have to stop more people from being infected,” he said. “The problem of human to human transmission has not yet been resolved.”

Without enough facilities to handle the number of cases, Wuhan has been building pre-fab hospitals and converting the gym and other large spaces to house patients and try to isolate them from others.

Risks of restarting business

The crossing of more grim thresholds has dimmed optimism that the near-quarantine of some 60 million people and other disease-control measures are working.

The restart of business poses a risk of further spreading the virus, but China has little recourse, said Cong Liang, secretary general of the National Development and Reform Commission, the country’s main economic planning body.

“Without the reopening of businesses, in the short term, it will affect the supply of medical material and ... in the long run, it will affect the supply of all kinds of production and life materials and will make the control and prevention efforts on the front line unsustainable. The target of defeating the epidemic will not be reached,” Cong said at a news conference.

Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, authorities evacuated some residents of an apartment block after two cases among those living there raised suspicion that the virus may be spreading through the building’s plumbing.

It was reminiscent of the SARS outbreak that killed hundreds in the semi-autonomous Chinese city. The biggest number of connected cases in that outbreak were in one apartment complex where the virus spread through sewage pipes.

Health officials called it a precautionary measure after a 62-year-old woman diagnosed with the virus Tuesday was found living 10 floors below a man who was earlier confirmed infected. The woman’s son and daughter-in-law, who live with her, were among seven new cas-

es reported last week in the city, where a total of 49 people have been infected.

The 34 households evacuated live above or below the woman and share the same sewage system. A modified toilet drainage pipe in her unit may have helped spread the virus and officials are checking if any other units have made such alterations while they disinfect the building.

Global flow of mail disrupted

Postal operators in the United States, China, Singapore and elsewhere said the suspension of flights to slow the virus spread was having a major impact on the global flow of letters and parcels.

The United States Postal Service informed its counterparts around the world on Tuesday that it was “experiencing significant difficulties” in dispatching letters, parcels and express mail to China, including Hong Kong and Macau, because airlines have suspended flights to those destinations.

It said the USPS said can no longer accept items destined for China “until sufficient transport capacity becomes available.”

The Universal Postal Union, a U.N. agency for postal cooperation between its 192 member countries, said the flight suspensions would impact mail delivery “for the foreseeable future.”

The Chinese mail service, China Post, said it was disinfecting postal offices, processing centers and vehicles to ensure the virus doesn’t spread via the mail and to protect postal staff.

The virus does “not survive for long on objects. It is therefore safe to receive postal items from China,” China Post said.

